

THE TALE OF BEOWULF

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THE TALE OF BEOWULF
SOMETIME KING OF THE
FOLK OF THE WEDER
GEATS TRANSLATED BY
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ARGUMENT

HROTHGAR, king of the Danes, lives happily and peacefully, and bethinks him to build a glorious hall called Hart. But a little after, one Grendel, of the kindred of the evil wights that are come of Cain, hears the merry noise of Hart and cannot abide it; so he enters thereinto by night, and slays and carries off and devours thirty of Hrothgar's thanes. Thereby he makes Hart waste for twelve years, and the tidings of this mishap are borne wide about lands. Then comes to the helping of Hrothgar Beowulf, the son of Ecgtheow, athane of King Hygelac of the Geats, with fourteen fellows. They are met on the shore by the land-warder, and by him shown to Hart and the stead of Hrothgar, who receives them gladly, and to whom Beowulf tells his errand, that he will help him against Grendel. They feast in the hall, and one Unferth, son of Ecglaf, taunts Beowulf through jealousy that he was outdone

by Breca in swimming. Beowulf tells the true tale thereof. And a little after, at nightfall, Hrothgar and his folk leave the hall Hart, and it is given in charge to Beowulf, who with his Geats abides there the coming of Grendel.

Soon comes Grendel to the hall, and slays a man of the Geats, hight Handshoe, and then grapples with Beowulf, who will use no weapon against him: Grendel feels himself over-mastered and makes for the door, and gets out, but leaves his hand and arm behind him with Beowulf: men on the wall hear the great noise of this battle and the wailing of Grendel. In the morning the Danes rejoice, and follow the bloody slot of Grendel, and return to Hart racing and telling old tales, as of Sigemund and the Worm. Then come the king and his thanes to look on the token of victory, Grendel's hand and arm, which Beowulf has let fasten to the hall-gable.

The king praises Beowulf and rewards him, and they feast in Hart, and the tale of Finn and Hengest is told. Then Hrothgar leaves Hart, and so does Beowulf also with his Geats, but the Danes keep guard there.

In the night comes in Grendel's Mother, and catches up Aeschere, athane of Hrothgar, and carries him off to her lair. In the morning is

Beowulf fetched to Hrothgar, who tells him of this new grief and craves his help.

Then they follow up the slot and come to a great water-side, and find thereby Aeschere's head, and the place is known for the lair of those two: monsters are playing in the deep, and Beowulf shoots one of them to death. Then Beowulf dights him and leaps into the water, and is a day's while reaching the bottom. There he is straightway caught hold of by Grendel's Mother, who bears him into her hall. When he gets free he falls on her, but the edge of the sword Hrunting (lent to him by Unferth) fails him, and she casts him to the ground and draws her sax to slay him; but he rises up, and sees an old sword of the giants hanging on the wall; he takes it and smites off her head therewith. He sees Grendel lying dead, and his head also he strikes off; but the blade of the sword is molten in his venomous blood. Then Beowulf strikes upward, taking with him the head of Grendel and the hilts of the sword. When he comes to the shore he finds his Geats there alone; for the Danes fled when they saw the blood floating in the water.

They go up to Hrothgar's stead, and four men must needs bear the head. They come to Hrothgar, and Beowulf gives him the hilts and

tells him what he has done. Much praise is given to Beowulf; and they feast together.

On the morrow Beowulf bids farewell to Hrothgar, more gifts are given, and messages are sent to Hygelac: Beowulf departs with the full love of Hrothgar. The Geats come to their ship and reward the ship-warder, and put off and sail to their own land. Beowulf comes to Hygelac's house. Hygelac is told of, and his wife Hygd, and her good conditions, against whom is set as a warning the evil Queen Thrytho.

Beowulf tells all the tale of his doings in full to Hygelac, and gives him his gifts, and the precious-gemmed collar to Hygd. Here is told of Beowulf, and how he was contemned in his youth, and is now grown so renowned.

Time wears; Hygelac is slain in battle; Heardred, his son, reigns in his stead, he is slain by the Swedes, and Beowulf is made king. When he is grown old, and has been king for fifty years, come new tidings. A great dragon finds on the sea-shore a mound wherein is stored the treasure of ancient folk departed. The said dragon abides there, and broods the gold for 300 years.

Now a certain thrall, who had misdane against his lord and was fleeing from his wrath, haps on the said treasure and takes a cup thence, which

he brings to his lord to appease his wrath. The Worm waketh, and findeth his treasure lessened, but can find no man who hath done the deed. Therefore he turns on the folk, and wars on them, and burns Beowulf's house.

Now Beowulf will go and meet the Worm. He has an iron shield made, and sets forth with eleven men and the thrall the thirteenth. He comes to the ness, and speaks to his men, telling them of his past days, and gives them his last greeting: then he cries out a challenge to the Worm, who comes forth, and the battle begins: Beowulf's sword will not bite on the Worm. Wiglaf eggs on the others to come to Beowulf's help, and goes himself straightway, and offers himself to Beowulf; the Worm comes on again, and Beowulf breaks his sword Nægling on him, and the Worm wounds Beowulf. Wiglaf smites the Worm in the belly; Beowulf draws his sax, and between them they slay the Worm.

Beowulf now feels his wounds, and knows that he is hurt deadly; he sits down by the wall, and Wiglaf bathes his wounds. Beowulf speaks, tells how he would give his armour to his son if he had one; thanks God that he has not sworn falsely or done guilefully; and prays Wiglaf to bear out the treasure that he may see it before he dies.

Wiglaf fetches out the treasure, and again bathes Beowulf's wounds; Beowulf speaks again, rejoices over the sight of the treasure; gives to Wiglaf his ring and his armour, and bids the manner of his bale-fire. With that he passes away. Now the dastards come thereto and find Wiglaf vainly bathing his dead lord. He casteth shame upon them with great wrath. Thence he sends a messenger to the barriers of the town, who comes to the host, and tells them of the death of Beowulf. He tells withal of the old feud betwixt the Geats and the Swedes, and how these, when they hear of the death of the king, will be upon them. The warriors go to look on Beowulf, and find him and the Worm lying dead together. Wiglaf chooses out seven of them to go void the treasure-house, after having bidden them gather wood for the bale-fire. They shove the Worm over the cliff into the sea, and bear off the treasure in wains. Then they bring Beowulf's corpse to bale, and they kindle it; a woman called the wife of aforetime, it may be Hygd, widow of Hygelac, bemoans him: and twelve children of the athelings ride round the bale, and bemoan Beowulf and praise him: and thus ends the poem.

THE STORY OF BEOWULF

I. AND FIRST OF THE KINDRED OF HROTHGAR.

WHAT! we of the Spear-Danes of yore
days, so was it
That we learn'd of the fair fame of
kings of the folks
And the athelings a-faring in framing of
valour.
Oft then Scyld the Sheaf-son from the hosts of
the scathers,
From kindreds a many the mead-settles tore;
It was then the earl fear'd them, sithence was he
first
Found bare and all-lacking; so solace he bided,
Wax'd under the welkin in worship to thrive,
Until it was so that the round-about sitters
All over the whale-road must hearken his will 10
And yield him the tribute. A good king was
that,

By whom then thereafter a son was begotten,
A youngling in garth, whom the great God sent
thither

To foster the folk; and their crime-need he felt
The load that lay on them while lordless they
lived

For a long while and long. He therefore, the
Life-lord,

The Wielder of glory, world's worship he gave him:
Brim Beowulf waxed, and wide the weal upsprang
Of the offspring of Scyld in the parts of the
Scede-lands.

Such wise shall a youngling with wealth be
a-working 20

With goodly fee-gifts toward the friends of his
father,

That after in eld-days shall ever bide with him,
Fair fellows well-willing when wendeth the war-
tide,

Their lief lord a-serving. By praise-deeds it
shall be

That in each and all kindreds a man shall have
thriving.

Then went his ways Scyld when the shapen
while was,

All hardy to wend him to the lord and his
warding:

Out then did they bear him to the side of the sea-
flood,

The dear fellows of him, as he himself pray'd them
While yet his word wielded the friend of the
Scyldings,

30

The dear lord of the land; a long while had he
own'd it.

With stem all be-ringed at the hythe stood the ship,
All icy and out-fain, the Atheling's ferry.

There then did they lay him, the lord well be-
loved,

The gold-rings' bestower, within the ship's barm,
The mighty by mast. Much there was the
treasure,

From far ways forsooth had the fret-work been led:
Never heard I of keel that was comelier dighted
With weapons of war, and with weed of the
battle,

With bills and with byrnies. There lay in his
barm

40

Much wealth of the treasure that with him
should be,

And he into the flood's might afar to depart.

No lesser a whit were the wealth-goods they dight
him

Of the goods of the folk, than did they who
aforetime,

When was the beginning, first sent him away
 Alone o'er the billows, and he but a youngling.

Moreover they set him up there a sign golden
 High up overhead, and let the holm bear him,
 Gave all to the Spearman. Sad mind they had in
 them,

And mourning their mood was. Now never knew
 men, 50

For sooth how to say it, rede-masters in hall,
 Or heroes 'neath heaven, to whose hands came
 the lading.

II. CONCERNING HROTHGAR, AND HOW HE BUILT THE HOUSE CALLED HART. ALSO GREDEL IS TOLD OF.

IN the burgs then was biding Beowulf the
 Scylding,

Dear King of the people, for long was he
 dwelling

Far-famed of folks (his father turn'd elsewhere,
 From his stead the Chief wended) till awoke to
 him after

Healfdene the high, and long while he held it,
 Ancient and war-eager, o'er the glad Scyldings:
 Of his body four bairns are forth to him rimed;
 Into the world woke the leader of war-hosts 60

Heorogar ; eke Hrothgar, and Halga the good ;
Heard I that Elan queen was she of Ongentheow,
That Scylding of battle, the bed-mate behalsed.

Then was unto Hrothgar the war-speed given,
Such worship of war that his kin and well-willers
Well hearken'd his will till the younglings were
waxen,

A kin-host a many. Then into his mind ran
That he would be building for him now a hall-
house,

That men should be making a mead-hall more
mighty

Than the children of ages had ever heard tell of: 70
And there within eke should he be out-dealing
To young and to old all things God had given,
Save the share of the folk and the life-days of men.
Then heard I that widely the work was a-banning
To kindreds a many the Middle-garth over
To fret o'er that folk-stead. So befell to him timely
Right soon among men that made was it yarely
The most of hall-houses, and Hart its name shap'd
he,

Who wielded his word full widely around.

His behest he belied not ; it was he dealt the
rings,

The wealth at the high-tide. Then up rose the
hall-house,

High up and horn-gabled. Hot surges it bided
Of fire-flame the loathly, nor long was it thence-
forth

Ere sorely the edge-hate 'twixt Son and Wife's
Father

After the slaughter-strife there should awaken.

Then the ghost heavy-strong bore with it hardly
E'en for a while of time, bider in darkness,
That there on each day of days heard he the
mirth-tide

Loud in the hall-house. There was the harp's voice,
And clear song of shaper. Said he who could it 90
To tell the first fashion of men from aforetime;
Quoth how the Almighty One made the Earth's
fashion,

The fair field and bright midst the bow of the
Waters,

And with victory beglory'd set Sun and Moon,
Bright beams to enlighten the biders on land:
And how he adorned all parts of the earth
With limbs and with leaves; and life withal shaped
For the kindred of each thing that quick on earth
wendeth.

So liv'd on all happy the host of the kinsmen
In game and in glee, until one wight began, 100
A fiend out of hell-pit, the framing of evil,
And Grendel forsooth the grim guest was hight,

The mighty mark-strider, the holder of moorland,
The fen and the fastness. The stead of the fifel
That wight all unhappy a while of time warded,
Sithence that the Shaper him had for-written.

On the kindred of Cain the Lord living ever
Awreaked the murder of the slaying of Abel.
In that feud he rejoic'd not, but afar him He
banish'd,
The Maker, from mankind for the crime he had
wrought. 110

But offspring uncouth thence were they awoken
Eotens and elf-wights, and ogres of ocean,
And therewith the Giants, who won war against
God

A long while; but He gave them their wages
therefor.

III. HOW GRENDEL FELL UPON HART AND WASTED IT.

NOW went he a-spying, when come was the
night-tide,
The house on high builded, and how there
the Ring-Danes

Their beer-drinking over had bouned them to bed;
And therein he found them, the atheling fellows,
Asleep after feasting. Then sorrow they knew not

Nor the woe of mankind: but the wight of
wealth's waning, 120

The grim and the greedy, soon yare was he gotten,
All furious and fierce, and he raught up from
resting

A thirty of thanes, and thence aback got him
Right fain of his gettings, and homeward to fare,
Fulfilled of slaughter his stead to go look on.

Thereafter at dawning, when day was yet early,
The war-craft of Grendel to men grew unhidden,
And after his meal was the weeping uphoven,
Mickle voice of the morning-tide: there the
Prince mighty,

The Atheling exceeding good, unblithe he sat, 130
Tholing the heavy woe;thane-sorrow dreed he
Since the slot of the loathly wight there they had
look'd on,

The ghost all accursed. O'er grisly the strife was,
So loathly and longsome. No longer the frist was
But after the wearing of one night; then fram'd he
Murder-bales more yet, and nowise he mourned
The feud and the crime; over fast therein was he.
Then easy to find was the man who would else-
where

Seek out for himself a rest was more roomsome,
Beds end-long the bowers, when beacon'd to him
was, 140

And soothly out told by manifest token,
The hate of the hell-thane. He held himself
sithence

Further and faster who from the fiend gat him.

In such wise he rul'd it and wrought against
right,

But one against all, until idle was standing
The best of hall-houses; and mickle the while was,
Twelve winter-tides' wearing; and trouble he
tholed,

That friend of the Scyldings, of woes every one
And wide-spreading sorrows: for sithence it fell
That unto men's children unbidden 'twas known
Full sadly in singing, that Grendel won war 151
'Gainst Hrothgar a while of time, hate-envy
waging,

And crime-guilts and feud for seasons no few,
And strife without stinting. For the sake of no
kindness

Unto any of men of the main-host of Dane-folk
Would he thrust off the life-bale, or by fee-gild
allay it,

Nor was there a wise man that needed to ween
The bright boot to have at the hand of the slayer.
The monster the fell one afflicted them sorely,
That death-shadow darksome the doughty and
youthful

Enfetter'd, ensnared; night by night was he
faring

The moorlands the misty. But never know men
Of spell-workers of Hell to and fro where they
wander.

So crime-guilts a many the foeman of mankind,
The fell alone-farer, fram'd oft and full often,
Cruel hard shames and wrongful, and Hart he
abode in,

The treasure-stain'd hall, in the dark of the night-
tide;

But never the gift-stool therein might he greet,
The treasure before the Creator he trow'd not.

Mickle wrack was it soothly for the friend of
the Scyldings, 170

Yea heart and mood breaking. Now sat there a
many

Of the mighty in rune, and won them the rede
Of what thing for the strong-soul'd were best of
all things

Which yet they might frame 'gainst the fear and
the horror.

And whiles they behight them at the shrines of
the heathen

To worship the idols; and pray'd they in words,
That he, the ghost-slayer, would frame for them
helping

'Gainst the folk-threats and evil. So far'd they
their wont,
The hope of the heathen; nor hell they remember'd
In mood and in mind. And the Maker they
knew not, 180
The Doomer of deeds: nor of God the Lord
wist they,
Nor the Helm of the Heavens knew aught how
to hery,
The Wielder of Glory. Woe worth unto that man
Who through hatred the baneful his soul shall
shove into
The fire's embrace; nought of fostering weens he,
Nor of changing one whit. But well is he soothly
That after the death-day shall seek to the Lord,
In the breast of the Father all peace ever craving.

IV. NOW COMES BEOWULF ECG-
THEOW'S SON TO THE LAND OF THE
DANES, AND THE WALL-WARDEN
SPEAKETH WITH HIM.

SO care that was time-long the kinsman of
Healfdene
Still seeth'd without ceasing, nor might the
wise warrior 190
Wend otherwhere woe, for o'er strong was the strife

All loathly so longsome late laid on the people,
Need-wrack and grim nithing, of night-bales the
greatest.

Now that from his home heard the Hygelac's
thane,
Good midst of the Geat-folk ; of Grendel's deeds
heard he.

But he was of mankind of might and main
mightiest

In the day that we tell of, the day of this life,
All noble, strong-waxen. He bade a wave-
wearer

Right good to be gear'd him, and quoth he that
the war-king

Over the swan-road he would be seeking, 200
The folk-lord far-famed, since lack of men had he.
Forsooth of that faring the carles wiser-fashion'd
Laid little blame on him, though lief to them
was he ;

The heart-hardy whetted they, heeded the omen.
There had the good one, e'en he of the Geat-folk,
Champions out-chosen of them that he keenest
Might find for his needs ; and he then the
fifteenth

Sought to the sound-wood. A swain thereon
show'd him,

A sea-crafty man, all the make of the land-marks.

Wore then a while, on the waves was the
floater, 210
The boat under the berg, and yare then the
warriors
Strode up on the stem ; the streams were a-winding
The sea 'gainst the sands. Upbore the swains then
Up into the bark's barm the bright-fretted
weapons,
The war-array stately; then out the lads shov'd her,
The folk on the welcome way shov'd out the
wood-bound.
Then by the wind driven out o'er the wave-holm
Far'd the foamy-neck'd floater most like to a fowl,
Till when was the same tide of the second day's
wearing
The wound-about-stemm'd one had waded her way,
So that then they that sail'd her had sight of the
land, 221
Bleak shine of the sea-cliffs, bergs steep up above,
Sea-nesses wide reaching ; the sound was won over,
The sea-way was ended : then up ashore swiftly
The band of the Weder-folk up on earth wended ;
They bound up the sea-wood, their sarks on them
rattled,
Their weed of the battle, and God there they
thanked
For that easy the wave-ways were waxen unto them.

But now from the wall saw the Scylding-folks'
warder,

E'en he who the holm-cliffs should ever be holding,
Men bear o'er the gangway the bright shields
a-shining, 231

Folk-host gear all ready. Then mind-longing
wore him,

And stirr'd up his mood to wot who were the
men-folk.

So shoreward down far'd he his fair steed a-riding,
Hrothgar's Thane, and full strongly then set he
a-quaking

The stark wood in his hands, and in council-
speech spear'd he :

What men be ye then of them that have war-
gear,

With byrnies bewarded, who the keel high up-
built

Over the Lake-street thus have come leading,
Hither o'er holm-ways hieing in ring-stem ? 240

End-sitter was I, a-holding the sea-ward,
That the land of the Dane-folk none of the
loathly

Faring with ship-horde ever might scathe it.

None yet have been seeking more openly hither
Of shield-havers than ye, and ye of the leave-word
Of the framers of war naught at all wotting,

Or the manners of kinsmen. But no man of earls
greater

Saw I ever on earth than one of you yonder,
The warrior in war-gear: no hall-man, so ween I,
Is that weapon-beworthy'd, but his visage belie
him, 250

The sight seen once only. Now I must be
wotting

The spring of your kindred ere further ye cast ye,
And let loose your false spies in the Dane-land
a-faring

Yet further afield. So now, ye far-dwellers,
Ye wenders o'er sea-flood, this word do ye hearken
Of my one-folded thought: and haste is the
handiest

To do me to wit of whence is your coming.

V. HERE BEOWULF MAKES ANSWER
TO THE LAND-WARDEN, WHO SHOW-
ETH HIM THE WAY TO THE KING'S
ABODE.

HE then that was chiefest in thus wise he
answer'd,
The war-fellows' leader unlock'd he the
word-hoard:

We be a people of the Weder-Geats' man-kin 260

And of Hygelac be we the hearth-fellows soothly.
My father before me of folks was well-famed
Van-leader and atheling, Ecgtheow he hight.
Many winters abode he, and on the way wended
An old' man from the garths, and him well re-
members

Every wise man well nigh wide yond o'er the
earth.

Through our lief mood and friendly the lord
that is thine,

Even Healfdene's son, are we now come a-seeking,
Thy warder of folk. Learn us well with thy
leading,

For we have to the mighty an errand full mickle,
To the lord of the Dane-folk: naught dark
shall it be,

271

That ween I full surely. If it be so thou wottest,
As soothly for our parts we now have heard say,
That one midst of the Scyldings, who of scathers
I wot not,

A deed-hater secret, in the dark of the night-tide
Setteth forth through the terror the malice un-
told of,

The shame-wrong and slaughter. I therefore to
Hrothgar

Through my mind fashion'd roomsome the rede
may now learn him,

How he, old-wise and good, may get the fiend
under,

If once more from him awayward may turn 280

The business of bales, and the boot come again,

And the weltering of care wax cooler once more ;

Or for ever sithence time of stress he shall thole,

The need and the wronging, the while yet there
abideth

On the high stead aloft the best of all houses.

Then spake out the warden on steed there
a-sitting,

The servant all un-fear'd : It shall be of either

That the shield-warrior sharp the sundering
wotteth,

Of words and of works, if he think thereof well.

I hear it thus said that this host here is friendly 290

To the lord of the Scyldings ; forth fare ye then,
bearing

Your weed and your weapons, of the way will I
wise you ;

Likewise mine own kinsmen I will now be bidding

Against every foeman your floater before us,

Your craft but new-tarred, the keel on the sand,

With honour to hold, until back shall be bearing

Over the lake-streams this one, the lief man,

The wood of the wounden-neck back unto
Wedermark.

Unto such shall be granted amongst the good-
doers

299

To win the way out all whole from the war-race.
Then boun they to faring, the bark biding quiet;
Hung upon hawser the wide-fathom'd ship
Fast at her anchor. Forth shone the boar-shapes
Over the check-guards golden adorned,
Fair-shifting, fire-hard; ward held the farrow.
Snorted the war-moody, hasten'd the warriors
And trod down together until the hall timber'd,
Stately and gold-bestain'd, gat they to look on,
That was the all-mightiest unto earth's dwellers
Of halls 'neath the heavens, wherein bode the
mighty;

310

Glisten'd the gleam thereof o'er lands a many.
Unto them then the war-deer the court of the
proud one
Full clearly betought it, that they therewithal
Might wend their ways thither. Then he of the
warriors

Round wended his steed, and spake a word back-
ward:

Time now for my faring; but the Father All-
wielder

May He with all helping henceforward so hold you
All whole in your wayfaring. Will I to sea-side
Against the wroth folk to hold warding ever.

VI. BEOWULF AND THE GEATS COME INTO HART.

STONE-DIVERSE the street was, straight
S uplong the path led 320
The warriors together. There shone the war-
byrny

The hard and the hand-lock'd ; the ring-iron sheer
Sang over their war-gear, when they to the hall
first

In their gear the all-fearful had gat them to
ganging.

So then the sea-weary their wide shields set down,
Their war-rounds the mighty, against the hall's
wall.

Then bow'd they to bench, and rang there the
byrnies,

The war-weed of warriors, and up-stood the spears,
The war-gear of the sea-folk all gather'd together,
The ash-holt grey-headed ; that host of the
iron 330

With weapons was worshipful. There then a
proud chief

Of those lads of the battle spear'd after their line :

Whence ferry ye then the shields golden-faced,
The grey sarks therewith, and the helms all be-
visor'd,

And a heap of the war-shafts? Now am I of
Hrothgar

The man and the messenger : ne'er saw I of aliens
So many of men more might-like of mood.

I ween that for pride-sake, no wise for wrack-
wending

But for high might of mind, ye to Hrothgar have
sought.

Unto him then the heart-hardy answer'd and
spake, 340

The proud earl of the Weders the word gave
aback,

The hardy neath helm : Now of Hygelac are we
The board-fellows ; Beowulf e'en is my name,
And word will I say unto Healfdene's son,
To the mighty, the folk-lord, what errand is mine,
Yea unto thy lord, if to us he will grant it
That him, who so good is, anon we may greet.

Spake Wulfgar the word, a lord of the
Wendels,

And the mood of his heart of a many was kenned,
His war and his wisdom : I therefore the Danes'
friend 350

Will lightly be asking, of the lord of the
Scyldings,

The dealer of rings, since the boon thou art
bidding,

The mighty folk-lord, concerning thine errand,
And swiftly the answer shall do thee to wit
Which the good one to give thee aback may
deem meetest.

Then turn'd he in haste to where Hrothgar
was sitting
Right old and all hoary mid the host of his earl-
folk :

Went the valour-stark ; stood he the shoulders
before

Of the Dane-lord : well could he the doughty
ones' custom.

So Wulfgar spake forth to his lord the well-
friendly :

360

Hither are ferry'd now, come from afar off
O'er the field of the ocean, a folk of the Geats ;
These men of the battle e'en Beowulf name they
Their elder and chiefest, and to thee are they
bidding

That they, O dear lord, with thee may be dealing
In word against word. Now win them no naysay
Of thy speech again-given, O Hrothgar the glad-
man :

For they in their war-gear, methinketh, be worthy
Of good deeming of earls ; and forsooth naught
but doughty

Is he who hath led o'er the warriors hither. 370

VII. BEOWULF SPEAKETH WITH
HROTHGAR, AND TELLETH HOW HE
WILL MEET GRENDEL.

WORD then gave out Hrothgar the helm
of the Scyldings :

I knew him in sooth when he was but a
youngling,

And his father, the old man, was Ecgtheow hight ;
Unto whom at his home gave Hrethel the Geat-
lord

His one only daughter ; and now hath his off-
spring

All hardy come hither a lief lord to seek him.

For that word they spake then, the sea-faring men,
E'en they who the gift-scat for the Geat-folk had
ferry'd,

Brought thither for thanks, that of thirty of men-
folk

The craft of might hath he within his own hand-
grip,

380

That war-strong of men. Now him holy God

For kind help hath sent off here even to us,

We men of the West Danes, as now I have
weening,

'Gainst the terror of Grendel. So I to that good
one

For his mighty mood-daring shall the dear treasure bid.

Haste now and be speedy, and bid them in straightway,

The kindred-band gather'd together, to see us,
And in words say thou eke that they be well comen

To the folk of the Danes. To the door of the hall then

Went Wulfgar, and words withinward he flitted :

390

He bade me to say you, my lord of fair battle,

The elder of East-Danes, that he your blood knoweth,

And that unto him are ye the sea-surges over,
Ye lads hardy-hearted, well come to land hither ;
And now may ye wend you all in war-raiment
Under the battle-mask Hrothgar to see.

But here let your battle-boards yet be abiding,
With your war-weed and slaughter-shafts, issue of words.

Then rose up the rich one, much warriors around him,

Chosen heap of the thanes, but there some abided
The war-gear to hold, as the wight one was bidding.

401

Swift went they together, as the warrior there
led them,

Under Hart's roof: went the stout-hearted,
The hardy neath helm, till he stood by the high-
seat.

Then Beowulf spake out, on him shone the byrny,
His war-net besown by the wiles of the smith:

Hail to thee, Hrothgar! I am of Hygelac
Kinsman and folk-thane; fair deeds have I many
Begun in my youth-tide, and this matter of Gren-
del

409

On the turf of mine own land undarkly I knew.

'Tis the seafarers' say that standeth this hall,
The best house forsooth, for each one of warriors
All idle and useless, after the even-light
Under the heaven-loft hidden becometh.

Then lightly they learn'd me, my people, this
lore,

E'en the best that there be of the wise of the
churls,

O Hrothgar the kingly, that thee should I seek to,
Whereas of the might of my craft were they
cunning;

For they saw me when came I from out of my
wargear,

Blood-stain'd from the foe whenas five had I
bounden,

420

Quell'd the kin of the eotens, and in the wave
slain

The nicors by night-tide : strait need then I bore,
Wreak'd the grief of the Weders, the woe they
had gotten ;

I ground down the wrathful ; and now against
Grendel

I here with the dread one alone shall be dooming,
In Thing with the giant. I now then with thee,
O lord of the bright Danes, will fall to my
bidding,

O berg of Scyldings, and bid thee one boon,
Which, O refuge of warriors, gainsay me not now,
Since, O free friend of folks, from afar have I
come,

430

That I alone, I and my band of the earls,
This hard heap of men, may cleanse Hart of ill.
This eke have I heard say, that he, the fell
monster,

In his wan-heed recks nothing of weapons of war ;
Forgo I this therefore (if so be that Hygelac
Will still be my man-lord, and he blithe of
mood)

To bear the sword with me, or bear the broad
shield,

Yellow-round to the battle ; but with naught save
the hand-grip

With the foe shall I grapple, and grope for the
life

The loathly with loathly. There he shall believe
In the doom of the Lord whom death then shall
take. 441

Now ween I that he, if he may wield matters,
E'en there in the war-hall the folk of the Geats
Shall eat up unafear'd, as oft he hath done it
With the might of the Hrethmen: no need for
thee therefore

My head to be hiding; for me will he have
With gore all bestain'd, if the death of men get
me;

He will bear off my bloody corpse minded to
taste it;

Unmournfully then will the Lone-goer eat it,
Will blood-mark the moor-ways; for the meat
of my body 450

Naught needest thou henceforth in any wise
grieve thee.

But send thou to Hygelac, if the war have me,
The best of all war-shrouds that now my breast
wardeth,

The goodliest of railings, the good gift of
Hrethel,

The hand-work of Weland. Weird wends as she
willeth.

VIII. HROTHGAR ANSWERETH BEOWULF AND BIDDETH HIM SIT TO THE FEAST.

SPAKE out then Hrothgar the helm of the
Scyldings :

Thou Beowulf, friend mine, for battle that
wardeth

And for help that is kindly hast sought to us
hither.

Fought down thy father the most of all feuds ;
To Heatholaf was he forsooth for a hand-bane 460
Amidst of the Wylfings. The folk of the
Weders

Him for the war-dread that while might not
hold.

So thence did he seek to the folk of the South-
Danes

O'er the waves' wallow, to the Scyldings be-
worshipp'd.

Then first was I wielding the weal of the Dane-
folk,

That time was I holding in youth-tide the gem-
rich

Hoard-burg of the heroes. Dead then was
Heorogar,

Mine elder of brethren ; unliving was he,

The Healfdene's bairn that was better than I.
That feud then thereafter with fee did I settle ; 470
I sent to the Wylfing folk over the waters' back
Treasures of old time ; he swore the oaths
to me.

Sorrow is in my mind that needs must I say it
To any of grooms, of Grendel what hath he
Of shaming in Hart, and he with his hate-wiles
Of sudden harms framed ; the host of my hall-
floor,

The war-heap, is waned ; Weird swept them away
Into horror of Grendel. It is God now that
may lightly

The scather the doltish from deeds thrust aside.
Full oft have they boasted with beer well be-
drunken, 480

My men of the battle all over the ale-stoup,
That they in the beer-hall would yet be abiding
The onset of Grendel with the terror of edges.
But then was this mead-hall in the tide of the
morning,

This warrior-hall, gore-stain'd when day at last
gleamed,

All the boards of the benches with blood be-
steam'd over,

The hall laid with sword-gore : of lieges less
had I.

Of dear and of doughty, for them death had
gotten.

Now sit thou to feast and unbind thy mood
freely,

Thy war-fame unto men as the mind of thee
whetteth. 490

Then was for the Geat-folk and them all
together

There in the beer-hall a bench bedight roomsome,
There the stout-hearted hied them to sitting
Proud in their might : athane minded the service,
Who in hand upbare an ale-stoup adorned,
Skinked the sheer mead ; whiles sang the shaper
Clear out in Hart-hall ; joy was of warriors,
Men doughty no little of Danes and of Weders.

IX. UNFERTH CONTENDETH IN WORDS WITH BEOWULF.

SPAKE out then Unferth that bairn was of
Ecglaf,

And he sat at the feet of the lord of the
Scyldings, 500

He unbound the battle-rune ; was Beowulf's
faring,

Of him the proud mere-farer, mickle unliking,
Whereas he begrudg'd it of any man other

That he glories more mighty the middle-garth
over

Should hold under heaven than he himself held :

Art thou that Beowulf who won strife with
Breca

On the wide sea contending in swimming,
When ye two for pride's sake search'd out the
floods

And for a dolt's cry into deep water
Thrust both your life-days? No man the twain
of you, 510

Lief or loth were he, might lay wyte to stay you
Your sorrowful journey, when on the sea row'd ye ;
Then when the ocean-stream ye with your arms
deck'd,

Meted the mere-streets, there your hands bran-
dish'd !

O'er the Spearman ye glided ; the sea with waves
welter'd,

The surge of the winter. Ye twain in the waves'
might

For a seven nights swink'd. He outdid thee in
swimming,

And the more was his might ; but him in the
morn-tide

To the Heatho-Remes' land the holm bore
ashore,

And thence away sought he to his dear land and
lovely, 520

The lief to his people sought the land of the
Brondings,

The fair burg peace-warding, where he the folk
owned,

The burg and the gold rings. What to thee-
ward he boasted,

Beanstan's son, for thee soothly he brought it
about.

Now ween I for thee things worser than erewhile,
Though thou in the war-race wert everywhere
doughty,

In the grim war, if thou herein Grendel darest
Night-long for a while of time nigh to abide.

Then Beowulf spake out, the Ecgtheow's bairn:
What! thou no few of things, O Unferth my
friend, 530

And thou drunken with beer; about Breca hast
spoken,

Saidest out of his journey; so the sooth now I tell:
To wit, that the more might ever I owned,

Hard wearing on wave more than any man else.

We twain then, we quoth it, while yet we were
younglings,

And we boasted between us, the twain of us being
yet

In our youth-days, that we out onto the Spearman
Our lives would adventure; and e'en so we
wrought it.

We had a sword naked, when on the sound row'd
we, 539

Hard in hand, as we twain against the whale-fishes
Had mind to be warding us. No whit from me
In the waves of the sea-flood afar might he float
The hastier in holm, nor would I from him hie me.
Then we two together, we were in the sea

For a five nights, till us twain the flood drave
asunder,

The weltering of waves. Then the coldest of
weathers

In the dusking of night and the wind from the
northward

Battle-grim turn'd against us, rough grown were
the billows.

Of the mere-fishes then was the mood all up-
stirred;

There me 'gainst the loathly the body-sark mine,
The hard and the hand-lock'd, was framing me
help, 551

My battle-rail braided, it lay on my breast
Gear'd graithly with gold. But me to the ground
tugg'd

A foe and fiend-scather; fast he had me in hold

That grim one in grip : yet to me was it given,
That the wretch there, the monster, with point
 might I reach,
With my bill of the battle, and the war-race off
 bore
The mighty mere-beast through the hand that
 was mine.

X. BEOWULF MAKES AN END OF HIS
TALE OF THE SWIMMING. WEALH-
THEOW, HROTHGAR'S QUEEN, GREETES
HIM; AND HROTHGAR DELIVERS TO
HIM THE WARDING OF THE HALL.

THUS oft and oft over the doers of evil
They threaten'd me hard ; thane-service I
 did them

560

With the dear sword of mine, as forsooth it was
 meet,

That nowise of their fill did they win them the joy
The evil fordoers in swallowing me down,
Sitting round at the feast nigh the ground of the
 sea.

Yea rather, a morning-tide, mangled by sword-edge
Along the waves' leaving up there did they lie
Lull'd asleep with the sword, so that never
 sithence

About the deep floods for the farers o'er ocean
The way have they letted. Came the light from
the eastward, 569

The bright beacon of God, and grew the seas calm,
So that the sea-nesses now might I look on,
The windy walls. Thuswise Weird oft will be
saving

The earl that is unfey, when his valour availeth.
Whatever, it happ'd me that I with the sword slew
Nicors nine. Never heard I of fighting a night-
tide

'Neath the vault of the heavens was harder than
that,

Nor yet on the sea-streams of woefuller wight.
Whatever, forth won I with life from the foes'
clutch

All of wayfaring weary. But me the sea upbore,
The flood downlong the tide with the weltering
of waters, 580

All onto the Finnland. No whit of thee ever
Mid such strife of the battle-gear have I heard say,
Such terrors of bills. Nor never yet Breca
In the play of the battle, nor both you, nor either,
So dearly the deeds have framed forsooth
With the bright flashing swords; though of this
naught I boast me.

But thou of thy brethren the banesman becamest,

Yea thine head-kin forsooth, for which in hell
shalt thou

Dree weird of damnation, though doughty thy
wit be ;

For unto thee say I forsooth, son of Ecglaf, 590
That so many deeds never Grendel had done,
That monster the loathly, against thine own lord,
The shaming in Hart-hall, if suchwise thy mind
were,

And thy soul e'en as battle-fierce, such as thou
sayest.

But he, he hath fram'd it that the feud he may
heed not,

The fearful edge-onset that is of thy folk,
Nor sore need be fearful of the Victory-Scyldings.
The need-pledges taketh he, no man he spareth
Of the folk of the Danes, driveth war as he lusteth,
Slayeth and feasteth unweening of strife 600

With them of the Spear-Danes. But I, I shall
show it,

The Geats' wightness and might ere the time
weareth old,

Shall bide him in war-tide. Then let him go who
may go

High-hearted to mead, sithence when the morn-
light

O'er the children of men of the second day hence,

The sun clad in heaven's air, shines from the southward.

Then merry of heart was the meter of treasures,
The hoary-man'd war-renown'd, help now he
 trow'd in ;

The lord of the Bright-Danes on Beowulf
 hearken'd, 609

The folk-shepherd knew him, his fast-ready mind.
There was laughter of heroes, and high the din rang
And winsome the words were. Went Wealhtheow
 forth,

The Queen she of Hrothgar, of courtesies mindful,
The gold-array'd greeted the grooms in the hall,
The free and frank woman the beaker there wended,
And first to the East-Dane-folk's fatherland's
 warder,

And bade him be blithe at the drinking of beer,
To his people beloved, and lustily took he
The feast and the hall-cup, that victory-fam'd
 King.

Then round about went she, the Dame of the
 Helmings, 620

And to doughty and youngsome, each deal of the
 folk there,

Gave cups of the treasure, till now it betid
That to Beowulf duly the Queen the ring-dighted,
Of mind high uplifted, the mead-beaker bare.

Then she greeted the Geat-lord, and gave God
the thank,

She, the wisefast in words, that the will had wax'd
in her

In one man of the earls to have trusting and troth
For comfort from crimes. But the cup then he
took,

The slaughter-fierce warrior, from Wealhtheow
the Queen. 629

And then rim'd he the word, making ready for war,
And Beowulf spake forth, the Ecgtheow's bairn :

E'en that in mind had I when up on holm
strode I,

And in sea-boat sat down with a band of my
men,

That for once and for all the will of your people
Would I set me to work, or on slaughter-field
cringe

Fast in grip of the fiend ; yea and now shall I
frame

The valour of earl-folk, or else be abiding

The day of mine end, here down in the mead-hall.

To the wife those his words well liking they
were,

The big word of the Geat ; and the gold-adorn'd
wended, 640

The frank and free Queen to sit by her lord.

And thereafter within the high hall was as erst
The proud word outspoken and bliss on the people,
Was the sound of the victory-folk, till on a sudden
The Healfdene's son would now be a-seeking
His rest of the even: wotted he for the Evil
Within the high hall was the Hild-play bedight,
Sithence that the sun-light no more should they see,
When night should be darkening, and down
over all

The shapes of the shadow-helms should be
a-striding 650

Wan under the welkin. Uprose then all war-folk;
Then greeted the glad-minded one man the other,
Hrothgar to Beowulf, bidding him hail,
And the wine-hall to wield, and withal quoth the
word:

Never to any man erst have I given,
Since the hand and the shield's round aloft might
I heave,
This high hall of the Dane-folk, save now unto
thee.

Have now and hold the best of all houses,
Mind thee of fame, show the might of thy valour!
Wake the wroth one: no lack shall there be to
thy willing 660

If that wight work thou win and life there-
withal.

XI. NOW IS BEOWULF LEFT IN THE HALL ALONE WITH HIS MEN.

THEN wended him Hrothgar with the
band of his warriors,
The high-ward of the Scyldings from out
of the hall,

For then would the war-lord go seek unto Wealh-
theow

The Queen for a bed-mate. The glory of king-
folk

Against Grendel had set, as men have heard say,
A hall-ward who held him a service apart
In the house of the Dane-lord, for eoten-ward
held he.

Forsooth he, the Geat-lord, full gladly he trowed
In the might of his mood and the grace of the
Maker. 670

Therewith he did off him his byrny of iron
And the helm from his head, and his dighted
sword gave,

The best of all irons, to the thane that abode
him,

And bade him to hold that harness of battle.

Bespake then the good one, a big word he gave
out,

Beowulf the Geat, ere on the bed strode he :

Nowise in war I deem me more lowly
In the works of the battle than Grendel, I ween ;
So not with the sword shall I lull him to
 slumber,
Or take his life thuswise, though to me were it
 easy; 680
Of that good wise he wots not, to get the stroke
 on me,
To hew on my shield, for as stark as he shall be
In the works of the foeman. So we twain a
 night-tide
Shall forgo the sword, if he dare yet to seek
The war without weapons. Sithence the wise
 God,
The Lord that is holy, on which hand soever
The glory may doom as due to him seemeth.
 Bowed down then the war-deer, the cheek-
 bolster took
The face of the earl ; and about him a many
Of sea-warriors bold to their hall-slumber bow'd
 them ; 690
No one of them thought that thence away should
 he
Seek ever again to his home the beloved,
His folk ðr his free burg, where erst he was fed ;
For of men had they learn'd that o'er mickle a
 many

In that wine-hall aforetime the fell death had
gotten
Of the folk of the Danes ; but the Lord to them
gave it,
To the folk of the Weders, the web of war-
speeding,
Help fair and good comfort, e'en so that their
foeman
Through the craft of one man all they over-
came,
By the self-might of one. So is manifest
truth 700
That God the Almighty the kindred of men
Hath wielded wide ever. Now by wan night
there came,
There strode in the shade-goer ; slept there the
shooters,
They who that horn-house should be a-holding,
All men but one man : to men was that
known,
That them indeed might not, since will'd not the
Maker,
The scather unceasing drag off 'neath the
shadow ;
But he ever watching in wrath 'gainst the wroth
one
Mood-swollen abided the battle-mote ever.

XII. GRENDEL COMETH INTO HART: OF THE STRIFE BETWIXT HIM AND BEOWULF.

CAME then from the moor-land, all under
the mist-bents, 710
Grendel a-going there, bearing God's anger.
The scather the ill one was minded of mankind
To have one in his toils from the high hall aloft.
'Neath the welkin he waded, to the place whence
the wine-house,
The gold-hall of men, most yarely he wist
With gold-plates fair colour'd; nor was it the
first time
That he unto Hrothgar's high home had betook
him.
Never he in his life-days, either erst or there-
after,
Of warriors more hardy or hall-thanes had found.
Came then to the house the wight on his ways, 720
Of all joys bereft; and soon sprang the door
open,
With fire-bands made fast, when with hand he
had touch'd it;
Brake the bale-heedy, he with wrath bollen,
The mouth of the house there, and early there-
after

On the shiny-fleck'd floor thereof trod forth the
fiend ;

On went he then mood-wroth, and out from his
eyes stood

Likest to fire-flame light full unfair.

In the high house beheld he a many of warriors,

A host of men sib all sleeping together,

Of man-warriors a heap ; then laugh'd out his
mood ;

730

In mind deem'd he to sunder, or ever came day,

The monster, the fell one, from each of the men
there

The life from the body ; for befell him a boding

Of fulfilment of feeding : but weird now it was
not

That he any more of mankind thenceforward

Should eat, that night over. Huge evil beheld
then

The Hygelac's kinsman, and how the foul scather

All with his fear-grips would fare there before
him ;

How never the monster was minded to tarry,

For speedily gat he, and at the first stour,

740

A warrior a-sleeping, and unaware slit him,

Bit his bone-coffer, drank blood a-streaming,

Great gobbets swallow'd in ; thenceforth soon
had he

Of the unliving one every whit eaten
To hands and feet even : then forth strode he
 nigher,
And took hold with his hand upon him the high-
 hearted,
The warrior a-resting ; reach'd out to himwards
The fiend with his hand, gat fast on him rathely
With thought of all evil, and besat him his arm.
Then swiftly was finding the herdsman of foul
 deeds 750
That forsooth he had met not in Middle-garth
 ever,
In the parts of the earth, in any man else
A hand-grip more mighty ; then wax'd he of
 mood
Heart-fearful, but none the more outward might
 he ;
Hence-eager his heart was to the darkness to hie
 him,
And the devil-dray seek : not there was his service
E'en such as he found in his life-days before.
Then to heart laid the good one, the Hygelac's
 kinsman,
His speech of the even-tide ; uplong he stood
And fast with him grappled, till bursted his
 fingers. 760
The eoten was out-fain, but on strode the earl.

The mighty fiend minded was, whereso he might,
To wind him about more widely away thence,
And flee fenwards; he found then the might of
his fingers

In the grip of the fierce one; sorry faring was
that

Which he, the harm-scather, had taken to Hart.
The warrior-hall dinn'd now; unto all Danes
there waxed,

To the castle-abiders, to each of the keen ones,
To all earls, as an ale-dearth. Now angry were
both

Of the fierce mighty warriors, far rang out the
hall-house; 770

Then mickle the wonder it was that the wine-hall
Withstood the two war-deer, nor welter'd to earth
The fair earthly dwelling; but all fast was it
builded

Within and without with the banding of iron
By crafty thought smithy'd. But there from the
sill bow'd

Fell many a mead-bench, by hearsay of mine,
With gold well adorned, where strove they the
wrothful.

Hereof never ween'd they, the wise of the Scyld-
ings,

That ever with might should any of men

The excellent, bone-dight, break into pieces, 780
 Or unlock with cunning, save the light fire's
 embracing

In smoke should it swallow. So uprose the roar
 New and enough; now fell on the North-Danes
 Ill fear and the terror, on each and on all men,
 Of them who from wall-top hearken'd the weeping,
 Even God's foeman singing the fear-lay,
 The triumphless song, and the wound-bewailing
 Of the thrall of the Hell; for there now fast held
 him

He who of men of main was the mightiest
 In that day which is told of, the day of this life.

XIII. BEOWULF HATH THE VICTORY: GREDEL IS HURT DEADLY AND LEAVETH HAND AND ARM IN THE HALL.

NAUGHT would the earls' help for any-
 thing thenceforth 791

That murder-comer yet quick let loose of,
 Nor his life-days forsooth to any of folk
 Told he for useful. Out then drew full many
 Of Beowulf's earls the heir-loom of old days,
 For their lord and their master's fair life would
 they ward,

That mighty of princes, if so might they do it.
For this did they know not when they the strife
dreed,

Those hardy-minded men of the battle,
And on every half there thought to be hewing, 800
And search out his soul, that the ceaseless scather
Not any on earth of the choice of all irons,
Not one of the war-bills, would greet home for
ever.

For he had forsworn him from victory-weapons,
And each one of edges. But his sundering of soul
In the days that we tell of, the day of this life,
Should be weary and woeful, the ghost wending
elsewhere

To the wielding of fiends to wend him afar.
Then found he out this, he who mickle erst made
Out of mirth of his mood unto children of men 810
And had fram'd many crimes, he the foeman of
God,

That the body of him would not bide to avail
him,

But the hardy of mood, even Hygelac's kinsman,
Had him fast by the hand : now was each to the
other

All loathly while living : his body-sore bided
The monster : was manifest now on his shoulder
The unceasing wound, sprang the sinews asunder,

The bone-lockers bursted. To Beowulf now
Was the battle-fame given; should Grendel
thenceforth 819

Flee life-sick awayward and under the fen-bents
Seek his unmerry stead: now wist he more surely
That ended his life was, and gone over for ever,
His day-tale told out. But was for all Dane-folk
After that slaughter-race all their will done.

Then had he cleans'd for them, he the far-comer,
Wise and stout-hearted, the high hall of Hrothgar,
And sav'd it from war. So the night-work he
joy'd in

And his doughty deed done. Yea, but he for the
East-Danes

That lord of the Geat-folk his boast's end had
gotten,

Withal their woes bygone all had he booted, 830
And the sorrow hate-fashion'd that afore they had
dreed,

And the hard need and bitter that erst they must
bear,

The sorrow unlittle. Sithence was clear token
When the deer of the battle laid down there the
hand

The arm and the shoulder, and all there together
Of the grip of that Grendel 'neath the great roof
upbuilded.

XIV. THE DANES REJOICE; THEY GO
TO LOOK ON THE SLOT OF GRENDEL,
AND COME BACK TO HART, AND ON
THE WAY MAKE MERRY WITH RACING
AND THE TELLING OF TALES.

THERE was then on the morning, as I have
heard tell it,
Round the gift-hall a many of men of the
warriors :

Were faring folk-leaders from far and from near
O'er the wide-away roads the wonder to look on,
The track of the loathly : his life-sundering
nowise

841

Was deem'd for a sorrow to any of men there
Who gaz'd on the track of the gloryless wight ;
How he all a-weary of mood thence awayward,
Brought to naught in the battle, to the mere of
the nicors,

Now fey and forth-fleeing, his life-steps had flitted.
There all in the blood was the sea-brim a-welling,
The dread swing of the waves was washing all
mingled

With hot blood ; with the gore of the sword was
it welling ;

The death-doom'd had dyed it, sithence he un-
merry

850

In his fen-hold had laid down the last of his life,
His soul of the heathen, and hell gat hold on him.

Thence back again far'd they those fellows of old,
With many a young one, from their wayfaring
 merry,

Full proud from the mere-side on mares there
 a-riding

The warriors on white steeds. There then was
 of Beowulf

Set forth the might mighty; oft quoth it a many
That nor northward nor southward beside the
 twin sea-floods,

Over all the huge earth's face now never another,
Never under the heaven's breadth, was there a
 better,

860

Nor of wielders of war-shields a worthier of king-
 ship;

But neither their friendly lord blam'd they one
 whit,

Hrothgar the glad, for good of kings was he.

There whiles the warriors far-famed let leap

Their fair fallow horses and fare into flyting

Where unto them the earth-ways for fair-fashion'd
 seemed,

Through their choiceness well kenned; and whiles
 a king's thane,

A warrior vaunt-laden, of lays grown bemindful,

E'en he who all many of tales of the old days
A multitude minded, found other words also 870
Sooth-bounden, and boldly the man thus began
E'en Beowulf's wayfare well wisely to stir,
With good speed to set forth the spells well areded
And to shift about words. And well of all told he
That he of Sigemund erst had heard say,
Of the deeds of his might; and many things
uncouth :

Of the strife of the Wælsing and his wide way-
farings,
Of those that men's children not well yet they
wist,

The feud and the crimes, save Fitela with him ;
Somewhat of such things yet would he say, 880
The eme to the nephew ; e'en as they aye were
In all strife soever fellows full needful ;
And full many had they of the kin of the eotens
Laid low with the sword. And to Sigemund up-
sprang

After his death-day fair doom unlittle
Sithence that the war-hard the Worm there had
quelled;

The herd of the hoard ; he under the hoar stone,
The bairn of the Atheling, all alone dar'd it,
That wight deed of deeds ; with him Fitela was
not.

But howe'er, his hap was that the sword so through-
waded

890

The Worm the all-wondrous, that in the wall
stood

The iron dear-wrought: and the drake died the
murder.

There had the warrior so won by wightness,
That he of the ring-hoard the use might be
having

All at his own will. The sea-boat he loaded,
And into the ship's barm bore the bright fretwork
Wæls' son. In the hotness the Worm was to-
molten.

Now he of all wanderers was widely the greatest
Through the peoples of man-kind, the warder of
warriors,

899

By mighty deeds; erst then and early he throve.
Now sithence the warfare of Heremod waned,
His might and his valour, amidst of the eotens
To the wielding of foemen straight was he be-
trayed,

And speedily sent forth: by the surges of sorrow
O'er-long was he lam'd, became he to his lieges,
To all of the athelings, a life-care thenceforward.
Withal oft bemoaned in times that were older
The ways of that stout heart many a carle of the
wisest,

Who trow'd in him boldly for booting of bales,
And had look'd that the king's bairn should ever
be thriving, 910

His father's own lordship should take, hold the
folk,

The hoard and the ward-burg, and realm of the
heroes,

The own land of the Scyldings. To all men was
Beowulf,

The Hygelac's kinsman to the kindred of men-
folk,

More fair unto friends; but on Heremod crime
fell.

So whiles the men flyting the fallow street
there

With their mares were they meting. There then
was the morn-light

Thrust forth and hasten'd; went many a warrior
All hardy of heart to the high hall aloft

The rare wonder to see; and the King's self
withal 920

From the bride-bower wended, the warder of ring-
hoards,

All glorious he trod and a mickle troop had he,
He for choice ways beknown; and his Queen
therewithal

Meted the mead-path with a meyny of maidens.

XV. KING HROTHGAR AND HIS
THANES LOOK ON THE ARM OF
GRENDL. CONVERSE BETWIXT
HROTHGAR AND BEOWULF CON-
CERNING THE BATTLE.

OUT then spake Hrothgar; for he to the
hall went,

By the staple a-standing the steep roof he
saw

Shining fair with the gold, and the hand there of
Grendel:

For this sight that I see to the All-wielder
thanks

Befall now forthwith, for foul evil I bided,
All griefs from this Grendel; but God, glory's
Herder,

930

Wonder on wonder ever can work.

Unyore was it then when I for myself

Might ween never more, wide all through my
life-days,

Of the booting of woes; when all blood-be-
sprinkled

The best of all houses stood sword-gory here;

Wide then had the woe thrust off each of the
wise

Of them that were looking that never life-long

That land-work of the folk they might ward
from the loathly,
From ill wights and devils. But now hath a
warrior

Through the might of the Lord a deed made
thereunto

940

Which we, and all we together, in nowise
By wisdom might work. What! well might be
saying

That maid whosoever this son brought to birth
According to man's kind, if yet she be living,
That the Maker of old time to her was all-
gracious

In the bearing of bairns. O Beowulf, I now
Thee best of all men as a son unto me
Will love in my heart, and hold thou henceforward
Our kinship new-made now; nor to thee shall be
lacking

As to longings of world-goods whereof I have
wielding;

950

Full oft I for lesser things guerdon have given,
The worship of hoards, to a warrior was weaker,
A worser in strife. Now thyself for thyself
By deeds hast thou fram'd it that liveth thy fair
fame

For ever and ever. So may the All-wielder
With good pay thee ever, as erst he hath done it.

Then Beowulf spake out, the Ecgtheow's bairn :
That work of much might with mickle of love
We framed with fighting, and frowardly ventur'd
The might of the uncouth ; now I would that
rather

960

Thou mightest have look'd on the very man
there,

The foe in his fret-gear all worn unto falling.
There him in all haste with hard griping did I
On the slaughter-bed deem it to bind him indeed,
That he for my hand-grip should have to be lying
All busy for life : but his body fled off.

Him then I might not (since would not the
Maker)

From his wayfaring sunder, nor naught so well
sought I

The life-foe ; o'er-mickle of might was he yet,
The foeman afoot : but his hand has he left us, 970
A life-ward, a-warding the ways of his wending,
His arm and his shoulder therewith. Yet in nowise
That wretch of the grooms any solace hath got
him,

Nor longer will live the loathly deed-doer,
Beswinked with sins ; for the sore hath him now
In the grip of need grievous, in strait hold to-
gather'd

With bonds that be baleful : there shall he abide,

That wight dyed with all evil-deeds, the doom
mickle,
For what wise to him the bright Maker will
write it. 979

Then a silenter man was the son there of Ecglaf
In the speech of the boasting of works of the battle,
After when every atheling by craft of the earl
Over the high roof had look'd on the hand there,
Yea, the fiend's fingers before his own eyen,
Each one of the nail-steads most like unto steel,
Hand-spur of the heathen one; yea, the own claw
Uncouth of the war-wight. But each one there
quoth it,
That no iron of the best, of the hardy of folk,
Would touch him at all, which e'er of the
monster
The battle-hand bloody might bear away thence.

XVI. HROTHGAR GIVETH GIFTS TO BEOWULF.

THEN was speedily bidden that Hart be
withinward 991
By hand of man well adorn'd; was there a
many
Of warriors and wives, who straightway that wine-
house,

The guest-house, bedight them: there gold-shotten
shone

The webs over the walls, many wonders to look on
For men every one who on such things will stare.

Was that building the bright all broken about
All withinward, though fast in the bands of the
iron;

Asunder the hinges rent, only the roof there
Was saved all sound, when the monster of evil 1000
The guilty of crime-deeds had gat him to flight
Never hoping for life. Nay, lightly now may not
That matter be fled from, frame it whoso may
frame it.

But by strife man shall win of the bearers of souls,
Of the children of men, compelled by need,
The abiders on earth, the place made all ready,
The stead where his body laid fast on his death-bed
Shall sleep after feast. Now time and place was it
When unto the hall went that Healfdene's son,
And the King himself therein the feast should be
sharing; 1010

Never heard I of men-folk in fellowship more
About their wealth-giver so well themselves
bearing.

Then bow'd unto bench there the abounders in
riches

And were fain of their fill. Full fairly there took

A many of mead-cups the kin of those men,
The sturdy of heart in the hall high aloft,
Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Hart there withinward
Of friends was fulfilled; naught there that was
guilesome

The folk of the Scyldings for yet awhile framed.

Gave then to Beowulf Healfdene's bairn 1020

A golden war-ensign, the victory's guerdon,
A staff-banner fair-dight, a helm and a byrny:
The great jewel-sword a many men saw them
Bear forth to the hero. Then Beowulf took
The cup on the floor, and nowise of that fee-gift
Before the shaft-shooters the shame need he have.
Never heard I how friendlier four of the treasures,
All gear'd with the gold about, many men erewhile
On the ale-bench have given to others of men.

Round the roof of the helm, the burg of the head,
A wale wound with wires held ward from without-
ward, 1031

So that the file-leavings might not over fiercely,
Were they never so shower-hard, scathe the shield-
bold,

When he 'gainst the angry in anger should get him.
Therewith bade the earls' burg that eight of the
horses

With cheek-plates adorned be led down the floor
In under the fences; on one thereof stood

A saddle all craft-bedeck'd, seemly with treasure.
 That same was the war-seat of the high King full
 surely 1039

Whenas that the sword-play that Healfdene's son
 Would work ; never failed in front of the war
 The wide-kenn'd one's war-might, whereas fell the
 slain.

So to Beowulf thereon of either of both
 The Ingwines' high warder gave wielding to have,
 Both the war-steeds and weapons, and bade him
 well brook them.

Thuswise and so manly the mighty of princes,
 Hoard-warden of heroes, the battle-race paid
 With mares and with gems, so as no man shall
 blame them,

E'en he who will say sooth aright as it is.

XVII. THEY FEAST IN HART. THE GLEEMAN SINGS OF FINN AND HEN- GEST.

THEN the lord of the earl-folk to every
 and each one 1050
 Of them who with Beowulf the sea-ways
 had worn

Then and there on the mead-bench did handsel
 them treasure,

An heir-loom to wit; for him also he bade it
That a were-gild be paid, whom Grendel aforetime
By wickedness quell'd, as far more of them would
he,

Save from them God all-witting the weird away
wended,

And that man's mood withal. But the Maker
all wielded

Of the kindred of mankind, as yet now he doeth.
Therefore through-witting will be the best every-
where

And the forethought of mind. Many things must
abide

1060

Of lief and of loth, he who here a long while
In these days of the strife with the world shall be
dealing.

There song was and sound all gather'd together
Of that Healfdene's warrior and wielder of battle,
The wood of glee greeted, the lay wreaked often,
Whenas the hall-game the minstrel of Hrothgar
All down by the mead-bench tale must be making :

By Finn's sons aforetime, when the fear gat
them,

The hero of Half-Danes, Hnæf of the Scyldings,
On the slaughter-field Frisian needs must he fall.
Forsooth never Hildeburh needed to hery 1071
The troth of the Eotens; she all unsinning

Was lorne of her lief ones in that play of the
linden,

Her bairns and her brethren, by fate there they fell
Spear-wounded. That was the all-woeful of
women.

Not unduly without cause the daughter of Hoc
Mourn'd the Maker's own shaping, sithence came
the morn

When she under the heavens that tide came to see,
Murder-bale of her kinsmen, where most had she
erewhile

1079

Of world's bliss. The war-tide took all men away
Of Finn's thanes that were, save only a few ;
E'en so that he might not on the field of the
meeting

Hold Hengest a war-tide, or fight any whit,
Nor yet snatch away thence by war the woe-
leavings

From the thane of the King ; but terms now they
bade him

That for them other stead all for all should make
room,

A hall and high settle, whereof the half-wielding
They with the Eotens' bairns henceforth might
hold,

And with fee-gifts moreover the son of Folkwalda
Each day of the days the Danes should beworthy ;

The war-heap of Hengest with rings should he
honour 1091

Even so greatly with treasure of treasures,
Of gold all beplated, as he the kin Frisian
Down in the beer-hall duly should dight.

Troth then they struck there each of the two
halves,

A peace-troth full fast. There Finn unto Hen-
gest

Strongly, unstrifeful, with oath-swearing swore,
That he the woe-leaving by the doom of the wise
ones

Should hold in all honour, that never man hence-
forth

With word or with work the troth should be
breaking, 1100

Nor through craft of the guileful should undo it
ever,

Though their ring-giver's bane they must follow
in rank

All lordless, e'en so need is it to be :

But if any of Frisians by over-bold speaking
The murderous hatred should call unto mind,
Then naught but the edge of the sword should
avenge it.

Then done was the oath there, and gold of the
golden

Heav'd up from the hoard. Of the bold Here-
Scyldings

All yare on the bale was the best battle-warrior ;
On the death-howe beholden was easily there 1110
The sark stain'd with war-sweat, the all-golden
swine,

The iron-hard boar ; there was many an atheling
With wounds all outworn ; some on slaughter-
field welter'd.

But Hildeburh therewith on Hnæf's bale she bade
them

The own son of herself to set fast in the flame,
His bone-vats to burn up and lay on the bale there :
On his shoulder all woeful the woman lamented,
Sang songs of bewailing, as the warrior strode
upward,

Wound up to the welkin that most of death-fires,
Before the howe howled ; there molten the heads
were, 1120

The wound-gates burst open, there blood was out-
springing

From foe-bites of the body ; the flame swallow'd
all,

The greediest of ghosts, of them that war gat
him

Of either of folks ; shaken off was their life-
breath.

XVIII. THE ENDING OF THE TALE OF FINN.

DEPARTED the warriors their wicks to
visit
All forlorn of their friends now, Friesland
to look on,
Their homes and their high burg. Hengest a
while yet
Through the slaughter-dyed winter bode dwelling
with Finn
And all without strife : he remember'd his home-
land,
Though never he might o'er the mere be
a-driving 1130
The high prow be-ringed : with storm the holm
welter'd,
Won war 'gainst the winds ; winter locked the
waves
With bondage of ice, till again came another
Of years into the garth, as yet it is ever,
And the days which the season to watch never
cease,
The glory-bright weather ; then gone was the
winter,
And fair was the earth's barm. Now hasten'd
the exile,

The guest from the garths; he on getting of
vengeance

Of harms thought more greatly than of the sea's
highway,

If he but a wrath-mote might yet be a-wending
Where the bairns of the Eotens might he still
remember. 1141

The ways of the world forwent he in nowise
Then, whenas Hunlafing the light of the battle,
The best of all bills, did into his breast,
Whereof mid the Eotens were the edges well
known.

Withal to the bold-hearted Finn befell after
Sword-bales the deadly at his very own dwell-
ing,

When the grim grip of war Guthlaf and Oslaf
After the sea-fare lamented with sorrow
And wyted him deal of their woes; nor then
might he 1150

In his breast hold his wavering heart. Was the
hall dight

With the lives of slain foemen, and slain eke was
Finn

The King 'midst of his court-men; and there
the Queen, taken,

The shooters of the Scyldings ferry'd down to
the sea-ships,

And the house-wares and chattels the earth-king
had had,
E'en such as at Finn's home there might they
find,
Of collars and cunning gems. They on the sea-
path
The all-lordly wife to the Danes straightly
wended,
Led her home to their people. So sung was the
lay,
The song of the gleeman; then again arose
game, 1160
The bench-voice wax'd brighter, gave forth the
birlers
Wine of the wonder-vats. Then came forth
Wealhtheow
Under gold ring a-going to where sat the two
good ones,
The uncle and nephew, yet of kindred unsunder'd,
Each true to the other. Eke Unferth the spokes-
man
Sat at feet of the Scyldings' lord; each of his heart
trow'd
That of mickle mood was he, though he to his
kinsmen
Were un-upright in edge-play. Spake the dame
of the Scyldings:

Now take thou this cup, my lord of the kingly,
Bestower of treasures! Be thou in thy joyance,
Thou gold-friend of men! and speak to these
Geat-folk 1171

In mild words, as duly behoveth to do;
Be glad toward the Geat-folk, and mindful of
gifts;

From anigh and from far peace hast thou as now.
To me one hath said it, that thou for a son
wouldst

This warrior be holding. Lo! Hart now is
cleansed,

The ring-hall bright-beaming. Have joy while
thou mayest

In many a meed, and unto thy kinsmen
Leave folk and dominion, when forth thou must
fare

To look on the Maker's own making. I know
now 1180

My Hrothulf the gladsome, that he this young
man

Will hold in all honour if thou now before him,
O friend of the Scyldings, shall fare from the
world;

I ween that good-will yet this man will be yield-
ing

To our offspring that after us be, if he mind him

Of all that which we two, for good-will and for
 worship,
Unto him erst a child yet have framed of kindness.
 Then along by the bench did she turn, where
 her boys were,
Hrethric and Hrothmund, and the bairns of high
 warriors,
The young ones together ; and there sat the good
 one, 1190
Beowulf the Geat, betwixt the two brethren.

XIX. MORE GIFTS ARE GIVEN TO
BEOWULF. THE BRISING COLLAR
TOLD OF.

BORNE to him then the cup was, and there-
 with friendly bidding
 In words was put forth ; and gold about
 wounden
All blithely they bade him bear ; arm-gearings
 twain,
Rail and rings, the most greatest of fashion of
 neck-rings
Of them that on earth I have ever heard tell of :
Not one under heaven wrought better was heard of
Midst the hoard-gems of heroes, since bore away
 Hama

To the bright burg and brave the neck-gear of
the Brisings,

The gem and the gem-chest: from the foeman's
guile fled he 1200

Of Eormenric then, and chose rede everlasting.

That ring Hygelac had, e'en he of the Geat-folk,
The grandson of Swerting, the last time of all
times

When he under the war-sign his treasure defended,
The slaughter-prey warded. Him weird bore
away

Sithence he for pride-sake the war-woe abided,
The feud with the Frisians; the fretwork he
fitted,

The gem-stones much worthy, all over the waves'
cup.

The King the full mighty cring'd under the shield;
Into grasp of the Franks the King's life was gotten
With the gear of the breast and the ring alto-
gether; 1211

It was worser war-wolves then reft gear from the
slain

After the war-shearing; there the Geats' war-folk
Held the house of the dead men. The Hall took
the voices;

Spake out then Wealhtheow; before the host
said she:

Brook thou this roundel, lief Beowulf, hence-
forth,
Dear youth, with all hail, and this rail be thou
using,
These gems of folk-treasures, and thrive thou
well ever ;
Thy might then make manifest ! Be to these
lads here
Kind of lore, and for that will I look to thy
guerdon. 1220
Thou hast won by thy faring, that far and near
henceforth,
Through wide time to come, men will give thee
the worship,
As widely as ever the sea winds about
The windy land-walls. Be the while thou art
living
An atheling wealthy, and well do I will thee
Of good of the treasures ; be thou to my son
In deed ever friendly, and uphold thy joyance !
Lo ! each of the earls here to the other is trusty,
And mild of his mood and to man-lord full
faithful,
Kind friends all the thanes are, the folk ever
yare. 1230
Ye well drunk of folk-grooms, now do ye my
biddings.

To her settle then far'd she ; was the feast of
the choicest,
The men drank the wine nothing wotting of weird,
The grim shaping of old, e'en as forth it had gone
To a many of earls ; sithence came the even,
And Hrothgar departed to his chamber on high,
The rich to his rest ; and aright the house warded
Earls untold of number, as oft did they erewhile.
The bench-boards they bar'd them, and there
they spread over
With beds and with bolsters. Of the beer-
skinkers one 1240
Who fain was and fey bow'd adown to his floor-
rest.
At their heads then they rested their rounds of
the battle,
Their board-woods bright-shining. There on the
bench was,
Over the atheling, easy to look on
The battle-steep war-helm, the byrny be-ringed,
The wood of the onset, all-glorious. Their wont
was
That oft and oft were they all yare for the war-tide,
Both at home and in hosting, were it one were it
either,
And for every such tide as their liege lord unto
The need were befallen : right good was that folk.

XX. GRENDEL'S DAM BREAKS INTO
HART AND BEARS OFF AESCHERE.

SO sank they to slumber; but one paid full
sorely 1251
For his rest of the even, as to them fell full
often

Sithence that the gold-hall Grendel had guarded,
And won deed of unright, until that the end
came

And death after sinning: but clear was it shown
now,

Wide wotted of men, that e'en yet was a wreaker
Living after the loathly, a long while of time
After the battle-care, Grendel's own mother;
The woman, the monster-wife, minded her woe,
She who needs must in horror of waters be won-
ning, 1260

The streams all a-cold, sithence Cain was become
For an edge-bane forsooth to his very own brother,
The own son of his father. Forth bann'd then
he fared,

All marked by murder, from man's joy to flee,
And dwelt in the waste-land. Thence woke there
a many

Ghosts shapen of old time, of whom one was
Grendel,

The fierce wolf, the hateful, who found him at
Hart

A man there a-watching, abiding the war-tide;
Where to him the fell ogre to hand-grips befell;
Howe'er he him minded of the strength of his
might, 1270

The great gift set fast in him given of God,
And trowed in grace by the All-wielder given,
His fostering, his staying; so the fiend he o'er-
came

And bow'd down the Hell's ghost, that all humble
he wended

Fordone of all mirth death's house to go look on,
That fiend of all mankind. But yet was his
mother,

The greedy, the glum-moody, fain to be going
A sorrowful journey her son's death to wreak.

So came she to Hart whereas now the Ring-
Danes

Were sleeping adown the hall; soon there befell
Change of days to the earl-folk, when in she came
thrusting, 1281

Grendel's mother: and soothly was minish'd the
terror

By even so much as the craft-work of maidens,
The war-terror of wife, is beside the man
weapon'd,

When the sword all hard bounden, by hammers
to-beaten,

The sword all sweat-stain'd, through the swine
o'er the war-helm

With edges full doughty down rightly sheareth.

But therewith in the hall was tugg'd out the
hard edge,

The sword o'er the settles, and wide shields a
many

Heaved fast in the hand : no one the helm heeded,
Nor the byrny wide-wrought, when the wild fear
fell on them.

1291

In haste was she then, and out would she thence-
forth

For the saving her life, whenas she should be
found there.

But one of the athelings she speedily handled
And caught up full fast, and fenward so fared.

But he was unto Hrothgar the liefest of heroes
Of the sort of the fellows ; betwixt the two sea-
floods

A mighty shield-warrior, whom she at rest brake
up,

A war-wight well famed. There Beowulf was not ;
Another house soothly had erewhile been dighted
After gift of that treasure to that great one of

Geats.

1301

Uprose cry then in Hart, all 'mid gore had she
taken
The hand, the well-known, and now care wrought
anew
In the wicks was arisen. Naught well was the
bargain
That on both halves they needs must be buying
that tide
With the life-days of friends. Then the lord
king, the wise,
The hoary of war-folk, was harmed of mood
When his elder of thanes and he now unliving,
The dearest of all, he knew to be dead.
To the bower full swiftly was Beowulf brought
now, 1310
The man victory-dower'd; together with day-dawn
Went he, one of the earls, that champion be-
worthy'd,
Himself with his fellows, where the wise was
abiding
To wot if the All-wielder ever will to him
After the tale of woe happy change work.
Then went down the floor he the war-worthy
With the host of his hand, while high dinn'd the
hall-wood,
Till he there the wise one with words had well
greeted,

The lord of the Ingwines, and ask'd had the
night been,
Since sore he was summon'd, a night of sweet
easement.

1320

XXI. HROTHGAR LAMENTS THE SLAY-
ING OF AESCHERE, AND TELLS OF
GRENDDEL'S MOTHER AND HER DEN.

SPAKE out then Hrothgar the helm of the
Scyldings :

Ask no more after bliss ; for new-made now
is sorrow

For the folk of the Danes ; for Aeschere is
dead,

He who was Yrmenlaf's elder of brethren,
My wise man of runes, my bearer of redes,
Mine own shoulder-fellow, when we in the war-
tide

Warded our heads and the host on the host fell,
And the boars were a-crashing ; e'en such should
an earl be,

An atheling exceeding good, e'en as was Aeschere.
Now in Hart hath befallen for a hand-bane unto
him

1330

A slaughter-ghost wandering ; naught wot I
whither

The fell one, the carrion-proud, far'd hath her
back-fare,

By her fill made all famous. That feud hath she
wreaked

Wherein yesternight gone by Grendel thou
quelledst

Through thy hardihood fierce with grips hard
enow,

For that he over-long the lief people of me
Made to wane and undid. In the war then he
cringed,

Being forfeit of life. But now came another,
An ill-scather mighty, her son to awreak ;
And further hath she now the feud set on foot,
As may well be deemed of many a thane, 1341

Who after the wealth-giver weepeth in mind,
A hard bale of heart. Now the hand lieth low
Which well-nigh for every joy once did avail you.

The dwellers in land here, my people indeed,
The wise-of-rede hall-folk, have I heard say e'en
this :

That they have set eyes on two such-like ere-
while,

Two mickle mark-striders the moorland a-holding,
Ghosts come from elsewhere, but of them one
there was,

As full certainly might they then know it to be,

In the likeness of woman ; and the other shap'd
loathly 1351

All after man's image trod the tracks of the exile,
Save that more was he shapen than any man other ;
And in days gone away now they named him
Grendel,

The dwellers in fold ; they wot not if a father
Unto him was born ever in the days of erewhile
Of dark ghosts. They dwell in a dim hidden
land,

The wolf-bents they bide in, on the nesses the
windy,

The perilous fen-paths where the stream of the
fell-side

Midst the mists of the nesses wends netherward
ever, 1360

The flood under earth. Naught far away hence,
But a mile-mark forsooth, there standeth the
mere,

And over it ever hang groves all berimed,
The wood fast by the roots over-helmeth the
water.

But each night may one a dread wonder there see,
A fire in the flood. But none liveth so wise
Of the bairns of mankind, that the bottoin may
know.

Although the heath-stepper beswinked by hounds,

The hart strong of horns, that holt-wood should
 seek to 1369

Driven fleeing from far, he shall sooner leave life,
 Leave life-breath on the bank, or ever will he
 Therein hide his head. No hallow'd stead is it :
 Thence the blending of water-waves ever upriseth
 Wan up to the welkin, whenso the wind stirreth
 Weather-storms loathly, until the lift darkens
 And weepeth the heavens. Now along the rede
 wendeth

Of thee again only. Of that earth yet thou
 know'st not,

The fearful of steads, wherein thou mayst find
 That much-sinning wight; seek then if thou dare,
 And thee for that feud will I guerdon with fee,
 The treasures of old time, as erst did I do, 1381
 With the gold all-bewounden, if away thence
 thou get thee.

XXII. THEY FOLLOW GRENDEL'S DAM TO HER LAIR.

SPAKE out then Beowulf the Ecgtheow's
 bairn :

O wise of men, mourn not ; for to each man
 'tis better

That his friend he awreak than weep overmuch.

Lo! each of us soothly abideth the ending
Of the life of the world. Then let him work
 who work may
High deeds ere the death: to the doughty of
 war-lads
When he is unliving shall it best be hereafter.
Rise up, warder of kingdom! and swiftly now
 wend we 1390
The Grendel Kinswoman's late goings to look on;
And this I behote thee, that to holm shall she
 flee not,
Nor into earth's fathom, nor into the fell-holt,
Nor the grounds of the ocean, go whereas she
 will go.
For this one of days patience dree thou a while
 then
Of each one of thy woes, as I ween it of thee.
 Then leapt up the old man, and lightly gave
 God thank,
That mighty of Lords, for the word which the
 man spake.
And for Hrothgar straightway then was bitted a
 horse,
A wave-maned steed: and the wise of the
 princes 1400
Went stately his ways; and stepp'd out the man-
 troop,

The linden-board bearers. Now lightly the tracks
were

All through the woodland ways wide to be seen
there,

Her goings o'er ground; she had gotten her
forthright

Over the mirk-moor: bore she of kindred thanes

The best that there was, all bare of his soul,

Of them that with Hrothgar heeded the home.

Overwent then that bairn of the athelings

Steep bents of the stones, and stridings full narrow,

Strait paths nothing pass'd over, ways all uncouth,

Sheer nesses to wit, many houses of nicors. 1411

He one of the few was going before

Of the wise of the men the meadow to look on,

Until suddenly there the trees of the mountains

Over the hoar-stone found he a-leaning,

A wood without gladness: the water stood under

Dreary and troubled. Unto all the Danes was it,

To the friends of the Scyldings, most grievous in
mood

To many of thanes such a thing to be tholing,

Sore evil to each one of earls, for of Aeschere 1420

The head did they find e'en there on the holm-
cliff;

The flood with gore welled (the folk looking on
it),

With hot blood. But whiles then the horn fell
to singing

A song of war eager. There sat down the band;
They saw down the water a many of worm-kind,
Sea-drakes seldom seen a-kenning the sound;
Likewise on the ness-bents nicors a-lying,
Who oft on the undern-tide wont are to hold
them

A course full of sorrow all over the sail-road.
Now the worms and the wild-deer away did they
speed

1430

Bitter and wrath-swollen all as they heard it,
The war-horn a-wailing: but one the Geats'
warden

With his bow of the shafts from his life-days
there sunder'd,

From his strife of the waves; so that stood in his
life-parts

The hard arrow of war; and he in the holm was
The slower in swimming as death away swept him.
So swiftly in sea-waves with boar-spears forsooth
Sharp-hook'd and hard-press'd was he thereupon,
Set on with fierce battle, and on to the ness tugg'd,
The wondrous wave-bearer; and men were be-
holding

1440

The grisly guest. Beowulf therewith he gear'd
him

With weed of the earls : nowise of life reck'd he :
Needs must his war-byrny, braided by hands,
Wide, many-colour'd by cunning, the sound seek,
E'en that which his bone-coffer knew how to ward,
So that the war-grip his heart ne'er a while,
The foe-snatch of the wrathful his life ne'er
should scathe ;

Therewith the white war-helm warded his head,
E'en that which should mingle with ground of
the mere,

And seek the sound-welter, with treasure be-
worthy'd, 1450

All girt with the lordly chains, as in days gone by
The weapon-smith wrought it most wondrously
done,

Beset with the swine-shapes, so that sithence
The brand or the battle-blades never might bite it.
Nor forsooth was that littlest of all of his main-
stays,

Which to him in his need lent the spokesman of
Hrothgar,

E'en the battle-sword hafted that had to name
Hrunting,

That in fore days was one of the treasures of old,
The edges of iron with the poison twigs o'er-stain'd,
With battle-sweat harden'd ; in the brunt never
fail'd he 1460

Any one of the warriors whose hand wound about
him,
Who in grisly wayfarings durst ever to wend him
To the folk-stead of foemen. Not the first of
times was it
That battle-work doughty it had to be doing.
Forsooth naught remember'd that son there of
Ecglaf,
The crafty in mighty deeds, what ere he quoth
All drunken with wine, when the weapon he lent
To a doughtier sword-wolf: himself naught he
durst it
Under war of the waves there his life to adventure
And warrior-ship work. So forwent he the glory,
The fair fame of valour. Naught far'd so the
other
Syth he to the war-tide had gear'd him to wend.

1471

XXIII. BEOWULF REACHETH THE
MERE-BOTTOM IN A DAY'S WHILE,
AND CONTENDS WITH GRENDEL'S
DAM.

OUT then spake Beowulf, Ecgtheow's bairn:
Forsooth be thou mindful, O great son of
Healfdene,
O praise of the princes, now way-fain am I,

O gold-friend of men, what we twain spake afore-
time :

If to me for thy need it might so befall
That I cease from my life-days, thou shouldest be
ever

To me, forth away wended, in the stead of a
father.

Do thou then bear in hand these thanes of my
kindred, 1480

My hand-fellows, if so be battle shall have me ;
Those same treasures withal, which thou gavest
me erst,

O Hrothgar the lief, unto Hygelac send thou ;
By that gold then shall wot the lord of the Geat-
folk,

Shall Hrethel's son see, when he stares on the
treasure,

That I in fair man-deeds a good one have found me,
A ring-giver ; while I might, joy made I thereof.
And let thou then Unferth the ancient loom have,
The wave-sword adorned, that man kenned widely,
The blade of hard edges ; for I now with
Hrunting 1490

Will work me the glory, or else shall death get me.

So after these words the Weder-Geats' chieftain
With might of heart hasten'd ; nor for answer
then would he

Aught tarry; the sea-welter straightway took
hold on

The warrior of men: wore the while of a daytide
Or ever the ground-plain might he set eyes on.

Soon did she find, she who the flood-ring
Sword-ravening had held for an hundred of seasons,
Greedy and grim, that there one man of grooms
The abode of the alien-wights sought from above;
Then toward him she grasp'd and gat hold on the
warrior

1501

With fell clutch, but no sooner she scathed within-
ward

The hale body; rings from without-ward it warded,
That she could in no wise the war-skin clutch
through,

The fast locked limb-sark, with fingers all loathly.
So bare then that sea-wolf when she came unto
bottom

The king of the rings to the court-hall adown
In such wise that he might not, though hard-
moody was he,

Be wielding of weapons. But a many of wonders
In sea-swimming swink'd him, and many a sea-deer
With his war-tusks was breaking his sark of the
battle;

- 1511

The fell wights him follow'd. 'Twas then the
earl found it

That in foe-hall there was he, I wot not of which,
Where never the water might scathe him a whit,
Nor because of the roof-hall might reach to him
there

The fear-grip of the flood. Now fire-light he saw,
The bleak beam forsooth all brightly a-shining.

Then the good one, he saw the wolf of the
ground,

The mere-wife the mighty, and main onset made he
With his battle-b^u; never his hand withheld
sword-swing 1520

So that there on her head sang the ring-sword for-
sooth

The song of war greedy. But then found the guest
That the beam of the battle would bite not there-
with,

Or scathe life at all, but there failed the edge
The king in his need. It had ere thol'd a many
Of meed^gs of hand; oft it sheared the helm,
The host-rail of the fey one; and then was the
first time

For that treasure dear lov'd that its might lay a-low.
But therewithal steadfast, naught sluggish of
valour,

All mindful of high deeds was Hygelac's kinsman.
Cast then the wouden blade bound with the
gem-stones 1531

Of thee o'er all peoples. Thou hold'st all with
patience,

Thy might with mood-wisdom; I shall make
thee my love good,

As we twain at first spake it. For a comfort thou
shalt be

Granted long while and long unto thy people,
For a help unto heroes. Naught such became
Heremod

To Ecgwela's offspring, the hopeful Scyldings;
For their welfare naught wax'd he, but for fell'g
in slaughter, 1711

Or the quelling of death to the folk of the Danes.
Mood-swollen he brake there his board-fellows
soothly,

His shoulder-friends, until he sunder'd him lonely,
That mighty of princes, from the mirth of all
men-folk.

Though him God the mighty in the joyance of
might,

In main strength, exalted high over all men,
And framed him forth, yet fast in his heart grew
A breast-hoard blood-fierce; none of fair rings
he gave

To the Danes as due doom would. Unmerry
he dured 1720

that yet of that strife the trouble he suffer'd,

A folk-bale so longsome. By such do thou learn
thee,

Get thee hold of man-valour: this tale for thy
teaching

Old in winters I tell thee. 'Tis wonder to say it,
How the high God almighty to the kindred of
mankind

Through his mind the wide-fashion'd deals wis-
dom about,

Home and earlship; he owneth the wielding of all.
At whiles unto love he letteth to turn

The mood-thought of a man that is mighty of
kindred,

And in his land giveth him joyance of earth, 1730
And to have and to hold the high ward-bur on
men,

And sets so 'neath his wielding the deals of the
world,

Dominion wide reaching, that he himself may not
In all his unwisdom of the ending butrink him.

He wonneth well-faring, nothing him wasteth

Sickness nor eld, nor the foe-sorrow to him

Dark in mind waxeth, nor strife any where,

The edge-hate, appeareth; but all the world for
him

Wends as he willeth, and the worse naught he
wotteth.

XXVI. MORE CONVERSE OF HROTHGAR AND BEOWULF: THE GEATS MAKE THEM READY FOR DEPARTURE.

UNTIL that within him a deal of o'erthink-
ing 1740
Waxeth and groweth while sleepeth the
warder,
The soul's herdsman; that slumber too fast is
forsooth,
Fast bounden by troubles, the banesman all nigh,
E'en he that from arrow-bow evilly shooteth.
Then he in his heart under helm is besmitten
With a bitter shaft; not a whit then may he ward
him
From the wry wonder-biddings of the ghost the
ail-wicked.
Too little he deems that which long he hath
hold,
Wrath-greedy he covets; nor e'en for boast-sake
gives
The rings fair beplated; and the forth-coming
doom 1750
Forgetteth, forheedeth, for that God gave him
erewhile,
The Wielder of glory, a deal of the worship.

At the ending-stave then it after befalleth
That the shell of his body sinks fleeting away,
And falleth all fey; and another one fetcheth,
E'en one that undolefully dealeth the treasure,
The earl's gains of aforetime, and fear never
 heedeth.

From the bale-envy ward thee, lief Beowulf,
 therefore,

Thou best of all men, and choose thee the better,
The redes everlasting; to o'erthinking turn not,
O mighty of champions! for now thy might
 breatheth 1761

For a short while of time; but eft-soon it shall be
That sickness or edges from thy strength thee
 shall sunder,

Or the hold of the fire, or the welling of floods,
Or the grip of the sword-blade, or flight of the
 spear,

Or eld the all-evil: or the beaming of eyen
Shall fail and shall dim: then shall it be forth-
 right

That thee, lordly man, the death over-masters.
E'en so I the Ring-Danes for an hundred of
 seasons

Did wield under the welkin and lock'd them by
 war 1770

From many a kindred the Middle-Garth over

With ash-spears and edges, in such wise that not
ever

Under the sky's run of my foemen I reckon'd.

What! to me in my land came a shifting of that,
Came grief after game, sithence Grendel befell,
My foeman of old, mine ingoer soothly.

I from that onfall bore ever unceasing

Mickle mood-care; herefor be thanks to the
Maker,

To the Lord everlasting, that in life I abided,

Yea, that I on that head all sword-gory there, 1780

Now the old strife is over, with eyen should stare.

Go fare thou to settle, the feast-joyance dree thou,

O war-worshipp'd! unto us twain yet there
will be

Mickle treasure in common when come is the
morning.

Glad of mood then the Geat was, and speedy
he gat him

To go see the settle, as the sage one commanded.

Then was after as erst, that they of the might-
fame,

The floor-sitters, fairly the feasting bedight them

All newly. The helm of the night loured over

Dark over the host-men. Uprose all the
doughty, 1790

For he, the hoar-blended, would wend to his bed,

That old man of the Scyldings. The Geat without measure,

The mighty shield-warrior, now willed him rest.
And soon now the hall-thane him of way-faring weary,

From far away come, forth show'd him the road,
E'en he who for courtesy cared for all things
Of the needs of the thane, e'en such as on that day

The farers o'er ocean would fainly have had.

Rested then the wide-hearted; high up the house tower'd

Wide-gaping all gold-dight; within slept the guest; 1800

Until the black raven, the blithe-hearted, boded
The heavens' joy: then was come thither a-hastening

The bright sun o'er the plains, and hasten'd the scathers,

The athelings once more aback to their people
All fain to be faring; and far away thence
Would the comer high-hearted go visit his keel.

Bade then the hard one Hrunting to bear,
The Ecglaf's son bade to take him his sword,
The iron well-lov'd; gave him thanks for the lending,

Quoth he that the war-friend for worthy he told,

THE TALE OF BEOWULF

Full of craft in the war; nor with word blam'd
he aught

1811

The edge of the sword. Hah! the high-hearted
warrior.

So whenas all way-forward, yare in their war-gear,
Were the warriors, the dear one then went to the
Danes,

To the high seat went the Atheling, whereas was
the other;

The battle-bold warrior gave greeting to Hroth-
gar.

XXVII. BEOWULF BIDS HROTHGAR
FAREWELL: THE GEATS FARE TO
SHIP.

OUT then spake Beowulf, Ecgtheow's bairn:
As now we sea-farers have will to be say-
ing,

We from afar come, that now are we fainest
Of seeking to Hygelac. Here well erst were we
Serv'd as our wills would, and well thine avail
was.

1821

If I on the earth then, be it e'en but a little,
Of the love of thy mood may yet more be an-
earning,
O lord of the men-folk, than heretofore might I,

Of the works of the battle yare then soon shall
I be.

If I should be learning, I over the flood's run,
That the sitters about thee beset thee with dread,
Even thee hating as otherwhile did they;
Then thousands to theeward of thanes shall I
bring

For the helping of heroes. Of Hygelac wot I,
The lord of the Geat-folk, though he be but a
youngling, 1831

That shepherd of folk, that me will he further
By words and by works, that well may I ward
thee,

And unto thine helping the spear-holt may bear,
A main-staying mighty, whenas men thou art
needing.

And if therewith Hrethric in the courts of the
Geat-house,

The King's bairn, take hosting, then may he a
many

Of friends find him soothly: far countries shall be
Better sought to by him who for himself is
doughty. 1839

Out then spake Hrothgar in answer to himward:
Thy word-saying soothly the Lord of all wisdom
Hath sent into thy mind; never heard I more
sagely

She the dear of her lineage, since Offa's floor
 Over the fallow flood by the lore of her father 1950
 She sought in her wayfaring. Well was she
 sithence

There on the man-throne mighty with good ;
 Her shaping of life well brooked she living ;
 High love she held to and the lord of the heroes ;
 Of all kindred of men by the hearsay of me
 The best of all was he the twain seas beside,
 Of the measureless kindred ; thereof Offa was
 For gifts and for war, the spear-keen of men,
 Full widely beworthy'd, with wisdom he held
 The land of his heritage. Thence awoke
 Eomær 1960

For a help unto heroes, the kinsman of Hemming,
 The grandson of Garmund, the crafty in war-
 strife.

XXIX. BEOWULF TELLS HYGELAC OF HROTHGAR: ALSO OF FREAWARU HIS DAUGHTER.

WENT his ways then the hard one, and
 he with his hand-shoal,
 Himself over the sand the sea-plain a-
 treading,
 The warths wide away ; shone the world's candle,

The sun slop'd from the southward; so dreed
they their journey,

And went their ways stoutly unto where the earls'
refuge,

The banesman of Ongentheow all in his burgs
there,

The young king of war, the good, as they heard it,
Was dealing the rings. Aright unto Hygelac 1970
Was Beowulf's speeding made knownen full
swiftly,

That there into the house-place that hedge of
the warriors,

His mate of the linden-board, living was come,
Hale from the battle-play home to him house-
ward.

Then rathe was beroomed, as the rich one was
bidding,

For the guests a-foot going the floor all within-
ward.

Then sat in the face of him he from the fight
sav'd,

Kinsman by kinsman, whenas his man-lord
In fair-sounding speech had greeted the faithful
With mightyful words. With mead-skinking
turned 1980

Through the high house adown the daughter of
Hæreth:

The people she loved : the wine-bucket bare she
To the hands of the men. But now fell to
Hygelac

His very house-fellow in that hall the high
To question full fairly, for wit-lust to-brake him,
Of what like were the journeys the Sea-Geats had
wended :

How befell you the sea-lode, O Beowulf lief,
When thou on a sudden bethoughtst thee afar
Over the salt water the strife to be seeking,
The battle in Hart ? or for Hrothgar forsooth 1990
The wide-kenned woe some whit didst thou mend,
For that mighty of lords ? I therefore the mood-
care

In woe-wellings seethed ; trow'd not in the
wending

Of thee the lief man. A long while did I pray thee
That thou the death-guest there should greet not
a whit ;

Wouldst let those same South-Danes their own
selves to settle

The war-tide with Grendel. Now to God say I
thank

That thee, and thee sound, now may I see.

Out then spake Beowulf, Ecgtheow's bairn :
All undark it is, O Hygelac lord, 2000
That meeting the mighty, to a many of men ;

Of what like was the meeting of Grendel and me
On that field of the deed, where he many a deal
For the Victory-Scyldings of sorrow had framed,
And misery for ever; but all that I awreaked,
So that needeth not boast any kinsman of Grendel
Any one upon earth of that uproar of dawn-dusk,
Nay not who lives longest of that kindred the
loathly

Encompass'd of fenland. Thither first did I come
Unto that ring-hall Hrothgar to greet; 2010
Soon unto me the great Healfdene's son,
So soon as my heart he was wotting forsooth,
Right against his own son a settle there showed.
All that throng was in joy, nor life-long saw I
ever

Under vault of the heavens amidst any hall-sitters
More mirth of the mead. There the mighty
Queen whiles,
Peace-sib of the folk, went all over the floor,
To the young sons bade heart up; oft she there
the ring-wreath

Gave unto a man ere to settle she wended.
At whiles fore the doughty the daughter of
Hrothgar 2020

To the earls at the end the ale-bucket bore;
E'en she whom Freawaru the floor-sitters thereat
Heard I to name; where she the nail'd treasure

Gave to the warriors. She was behight then
Youngling and gold-dight to the glad son of
Froda.

This hath seemed fair to the friend of the
Scyldings,

The herd of the realm, and good rede he ac-
counts it,

That he with that wife of death-feuds a deal
And of strifes should allay. Oft unseldom each-
where

After a lord's fall e'en but for a little 2030
Bows down the bane-spear, though doughty the
bride be.

XXX. BEOWULF FOREBODES ILL FROM
THE WEDDING OF FREAWARU: HE
TELLS OF GRENDEL AND HIS DAM.

ILL-LIKING this may be to the lord of the
Heathobards,

And to each of the thanes of that same people,
When he with fair bride on the floor of hall
wendeth,

That the Dane's noble bairn his doughty should
wait on,

As on him glisten there the heirlooms of the
aged,

Hard and with rings bedight, Heathobards'
treasure,

Whileas the weapons yet they might wield ;
Till astray did they lead there at the lind-play
Their own fellows belov'd and their very own
lives. 2040

For then saith at the beer, he who seeth the ring,
An ancient ash-warrior who mindeth of all
The spear-death of men ; grim is he of mind ;
Sad of mood he beginneth to tell the young
champion,

Through the thought of his heart his mind there
to try,

The war-bale to waken, and sayeth this word :
Mayest thou, friend mine, wot of the war-sword,
That which thy father bore in the fight
Under the war-mask e'en on the last time,
That the dear iron, whereas the Danes slew
him, 2050

Wiolded the death-field, since Withergyld lay,
After fall of the heroes, the keen-hearted
Scyldings?

Now here of those banesmen the son, whoseso
he be,

All merry in fretwork forth on floor fareth ;
Of the murder he boasteth, and that jewel he
beareth,

E'en that which of right thou shouldest arede.
Thus he mindeth and maketh word every of
times,

With sore words he telleth, until the time cometh
That the thane of the fair bride for the deeds of
his father

After bite of the bill sleepeth all blood-stain'd, 2060
All forfeit of life ; but thenceforth the other
Escapeth alive ; the land well he kenneth ;
Then will be broken on both sides forsooth
The oath-swearing of earls, whenas unto Ingeld
Well up the death-hatreds, and the wife-loves of him
Because of the care-wellings cooler become.

Therefore the Heathobards' faith I account not,
Their deal of the folk-peace, unguileful to Danes,
Their fast-bounden friendship. Henceforth must
I speak on

Again about Grendel, that thou get well to
know it, 2070

O treasure-out-dealer, how sithence betided
The hand-race of heroes : sithence heaven's gem
All over the grounds glided, came the wroth
guest,

The dire night-angry one us to go look on,
Whereas we all sound were warding the hall.
There then for Handshoe was battle abiding,
Life-bale to the fey ; he first lay alow,

The war-champion girded; unto him became
Grendel,

To the great thane of kindreds, a banesman of
mouth, 2079

Of the man well-beloved the body he swallow'd;
Nor the sooner therefor out empty-handed

The bloody-tooth'd banesman, of bales all be-
mindful,

Out from that gold-hall yet would he get him;

But he, mighty of main, made trial of me,

And gripp'd ready-handed. His glove hung aloft,

Wondrous and wide, in wily bands fast,

With cunning wiles was it begear'd forsooth,

With crafts of the devils and fells of the dragons;

He me withinwards there, me the unsinning,

The doer of big deeds would do me to be 2090

As one of the many; but naught so it might be,

Sithence in mine anger upright I stood.

'Tis over-long telling how I to the folk-
scatter

For each one of evils out paid the hand-gild.

There I, O my lord king, them thy leal people

Worthy'd with works: but away he gat loosed

Out thence for a little while, brooked yet life-
joys;

But his right hand held ward of his track howso-
ever,

High upon Hart-hall, and thence away humble
He sad of his mood to the mere-ground fell
downward. 2100

Me for that slaughter-race the friend of the
Scyldings
With gold that beplated was mickle deal paid,
With a many of treasures, sithence came the
morning,
And we to the feast-tide had sat us adown ;
Song was and glee there ; the elder of Scyldings,
Asking of many things, told of things o'erpast ;
Whiles hath the battle-deer there the harp's joy,
The wood of mirth greeted ; whiles the lay
said he
Soothfast and sorrowful ; whiles a spell seldom
told
Told he by right, the king roomy-hearted ; 2110
Whiles began afterward he by eld bounden,
The aged hoar warrior, of his youth to bewail
him,
Its might of the battle ; his breast well'd within
him,
When he, wont in winters, of many now minded.
So we there withinward the livelong day's wear-
ing
Took pleasure amongst us, till came upon men
Another of nights ; then eftsoons again

Was yare for the harm-wreak the mother of
Grendel :

All sorry she wended, for her son death had taken,
The war-hate of the Weders: that monster of
women

2120

Awreaked her bairn, and quelled a warrior
In manner all mighty. Then was there from
Aeschere,

The wise man of old, life waning away ;
Nor him might they even when come was the
morning,

That death-weary wight, the folk of the Danes
Burn up with the brand, nor lade on the bale
The man well-belov'd, for his body she bare off
In her fathom the fiendly all under the fell-
stream.

That was unto Hrothgar of sorrows the heaviest
Of them which the folk-chieftain long had be-
fallen.

2130

Then me did the lord king, and e'en by thy life,
Mood-heavy beseech me that I in the holm-
throng

Should do after earlship, my life to adventure,
And frame me main-greatness, and meed he
behight me.

Then I of the welling flood, which is well kenned,
The grim and the grisly ground-herder did find.

There to us for a while was the blending of hands ;
The holm welled with gore, and the head I be-
carved

In that hall of the ground from the Mother of
Grendel

With the all-eked edges ; unsoftly out thence 2140
My life forth I ferry'd, for not yet was I fey.
But the earls' burg to me was giving thereafter
Much sort of the treasures, e'en Healfdene's son.

XXXI. BEOWULF GIVES HROTHGAR'S
GIFTS TO HYGELAC, AND BY HIM IS
REWARDED. OF THE DEATH OF
HYGELAC AND OF HEARDRED HIS
SON, AND HOW BEOWULF IS KING OF
THE GEATS : THE WORM IS FIRST
TOLD OF.

SO therewith the folk-king far'd, living full
seemly ;

By those wages forsooth ne'er a whit had I
lost,

By the meed of my main, but to me treasure gave
he,

The Healfdene's son, to the doom of myself ;
Which to thee, king of bold ones, will I be
a-bringing,

And gladly will give thee ; for of thee is all
gotten

Of favours along, and but little have I 2150
Of head-kinsmen forsooth, saving, Hygelac, thee.

Then he bade them bear in the boar-shape, the
head-sign,

The battle-steep war-helm, the byrny all hoary,
The sword stately-good, and spell after he said :
This raiment of war Hrothgar gave to my hand,
The wise of the kings, and therewithal bade me,
That I first of all of his favour should flit thee ;
He quoth that first had it King Heorogar of old,
The king of the Scyldings, a long while of time ;
But no sooner would he give it unto his son, 2160
Heoroward the well-whet, though kind to him
were he,

This weed of the breast. Do thou brook it full
well.

On these fretworks, so heard I, four horses
therewith,

All alike, close followed after the track,
Steeds apple-fallow. Fair grace he gave him
Of horses and treasures. E'en thus shall do
kinsman,

And nowise a wile-net shall weave for another
With craft of the darkness, or do unto death
His very hand-fellow. But now unto Hygelac

The bold in the battle was his nephew full faithful,
2170

And either to other of good deeds was mindful.
I heard that the neck-ring to Hygd did he give,
E'en the wonder-gem well-wrought, that Wealh-
theow gave him,

The king's daughter; gave he three steeds there-
withal

Slender, and saddle-bright; sithence to her was,
After the ring-gift, the breast well beworthy'd.

Thus boldly he bore him, the Ecgtheow's bairn,
The groom kenned in battle, in good deeds a-
doing;

After due doom he did, and ne'er slew he the
drunken

Hearth-fellows of him: naught rough was his
heart;
2180

But of all men of mankind with the greatest of
might

The gift fully and fast set, which had God to
him given,

That war-deer did hold. Long was he con-
temned,

While the bairns of the Geats naught told him
for good,

Nor him on the mead-bench worthy of mickle
The lord of the war-hosts would be a-making.

Weened they strongly that he were but slack then,
 An atheling unkeen ; then came about change
 To the fame-happy man for every foul harm.

Bade then the earls' burg in to be bringing, 2190
 The king battle-famed, the leaving of Hrethel,
 All geared with gold ; was not 'mid the Geats then
 A treasure-gem better of them of the sword-kind,
 That which then on Beowulf's barm there he laid ;
 And gave to him there seven thousand in gift,
 A built house and king-stool ; to both them
 together

Was in that folkship land that was kindly,
 Father-right, home ; to the other one rather
 A wide realm, to him who was there the better.
 But thereafter it went so in days later worn 2200
 Through the din of the battle, sithence Hygelac
 lay low

And unto Heardred swords of the battle
 Under the war-board were for a bane ;
 When fell on him midst of this victory-folk
 The hard battle-wolves, the Scyldings of war,
 And by war overwhelmed the nephew of Hereric ;
 That sithence unto Beowulf turned the broad
 realm

All into his hand. Well then did he hold it
 For a fifty of winters ; then was he an old king,
 An old fatherland's warder ; until one began 2210

Through the dark of the night-tide, a drake, to
hold sway,
In a howe high aloft watched over an hoard,
A stone-burg full steep; thereunder a path sty'd
Unknown unto men, and therewithin wended
Who of men do I know not; for his lust there
took he,
From the hoard of the heathen his hand took away
A hall-bowl gem-flecked, nowise back did he
give it
Though the herd of the hoard him sleeping be-
guil'd he
With thief-craft; and this then found out the
king,
The best of folk-heroes, that wrath-bollen
was he.

2220

XXXII. HOW THE WORM CAME TO
THE HOWE, AND HOW HE WAS
ROBBED OF A CUP; AND HOW HE
FELL ON THE FOLK.

NOT at all with self-wielding the craft of
the worm-hoards
He sought of his own will, who sore him-
self harmed;
But for threat of oppression a thrall, of I wot not

Which bairn of mankind, from blows wrathful
fled,

House-needy forsooth, and hied him therein,
A man by guilt troubled. Then soon it betided
That therein to the guest there stood grisly
terror ;

However the wretched, of every hope waning
.

The ill-shapen wight, whenas the fear gat him,
The treasure-vat saw ; of such there was a many
Up in that earth-house of treasures of old, 2231
As them in the yore-days, though what man I
know not,

The huge leavings and loom of a kindred of high
ones,

Well thinking of thoughts there had hidden away,
Dear treasures. But all them had death borne
away

In the times of erewhile ; and the one at the last
Of the doughty of that folk that there longest
lived,

There waxed he friend-sad, yet ween'd he to tarry,
That he for a little those treasures the longsome
Might brook for himself. But a burg now all
ready

2240

Wonn'd on the plain nigh the waves of the water,
New by a ness, by narrow-crafts fasten'd ;

And in war-tide had gripped the kindred of
Grendel,

The loathly of kindreds ; nor was that the least
Of hand-meetings, wherein erst was Hygelac slain,
Sithence the Geats' king in the onrush of battle,
The lord-friend of the folks, down away in the
Frieslands,

The offspring of Hrethel, died, drunken of sword-
drinks,

All beaten of bill. Thence Beowulf came forth
By his own craft forsooth, dreed the work of the
swimming ;

He had on his arm, he all alone, thirty 2360
Of war-gears, when he to the holm went adown.
Then nowise the Hetware needed to joy them
Over the foot-war, wherein forth against him
They bore the war-linden : few went back again
From that wolf of the battle to wend to their
homes.

O'erswam then the waters' round Ecgtheow's
son,

Came all wretched and byrd-alone back to his
people,

Whereas offer'd him Hygd then the kingdom and
hoard,

The rings and the king-stool : trowed naught in
the child,

That he 'gainst folks outland the fatherland-
seats

2370

Might can how to hold, now was Hygelac
dead :

Yet no sooner therefor might the poor folk pre-
vail

To gain from the Atheling in any of ways

That he unto Heardred would be for a lord,

Or eke that that kingdom henceforward should
choose ;

Yet him midst of the folk with friend-lore he
held,

All kindly with honour till older he waxed

And wielded the Weder-Geats. To him men-
waifs thereafter

Sought from over the sea, the sons they of
Ohthere,

For they erst had withstood the helm of the
Scylfings,

2380

E'en him that was best of the kings of the sea,

Of them that in Swede-realm dealt out the
treasure,

The mighty of princes. . Unto him 'twas a life-
mark ;

To him without food there was fated the life-
wound,

That Hygelac's son, by the swinging of swords ;

And him back departed Ongentheow's bairn,
To go seek to his house, sithence Heardred lay
 dead,
And let Beowulf hold the high seat of the king
And wield there the Geats. Yea, good was that
 king.

XXXIV. BEOWULF GOES AGAINST THE
WORM. HE TELLS OF HEREBEALD
AND HÆTHCYN.

OF that fall of the folk-king he minded the
 payment 2390

In days that came after: unto Eadgils he
 was

A friend to him wretched; with folk he upheld
 him

Over the wide sea, that same son of Ohthere,
With warriors and weapons. Sithence had he
 wreaking

With cold journeys of care: from the king took
 he life.

Now each one of hates thus had he outlived,
And of perilous slaughters, that Ecgtheow's son,
All works that be doughty, until that one day
When he with the Worm should wend him to
 deal.

So twelvesome he set forth all swollen with
 anger, 2406
The lord of the Geats, the drake to go look on.
Aright had he learnt then whence risen the feud
 was,
The bale-hate against men-folk : to his barm then
 had come
The treasure-vat famous by the hand of the finder ;
He was in that troop of men the thirteenth
Who the first of that battle had set upon foot,
The thrall, the sad-minded ; in shame must he
 thenceforth
Wise the way to the plain ; and against his will
 went he
Thereunto, where the earth-hall the one there he
 wist, 2409
The howe under earth anigh the holm's welling,
The wave-strife : there was it now full all within
With gems and with wires ; the monster, the
 warden,
The yare war-wolf, he held him therein the hoard
 golden,
The old under the earth : it was no easy cheaping
To go and to gain for any of grooms.
Sat then on the ness there the strife-hardy
 king
While farewell he bade to his fellows of hearth,

The gold-friend of the Geats ; sad was gotten his
soul,

Wavering, death-minded ; weird nigh beyond
measure,

Which him old of years gotten now needs must
be greeting, 2420

Must seek his soul's hoard and asunder must deal
His life from his body : no long while now was
The life of the Atheling in flesh all bewounden.

Now spake out Beowulf, Ecgtheow's bairn :
Many a one in my youth of war-onsets I outliv'd,
And the whiles of the battle : all that I remember.
Seven winters had I when the wielder of treasures,
The lord-friend of folk, from my father me took,
Held me and had me Hrethel the king,
Gave me treasure and feast, and remember'd the
friendship. 2430

For life thence I was not to him a whit loather,
A berne in his burgs than his bairns were, or each
one,

Herebeald, or Hæthcyn, or Hygelac mine.
For the eldest there was in unseemly wise
By the mere deed of kinsman a murder-bed
strawen,

Whenas him did Hæthcyn from out of his horn-
bow,

His lord and his friend, with shaft lay alow :

His mark he miss'd shooting, and shot down his
kinsman,

One brother another with shaft all bebloody'd ;
That was fight feeless by fearful crime sinned, 2440
Soul-weary to heart, yet natheless then had
The atheling from life all unwreak'd to be
ceasing.

So sad-like it is for a carle that is aged
To be biding the while that his boy shall be
riding

Yet young on the gallows ; then a lay should he
utter,

A sorrowful song whenas hangeth his son
A gain unto ravens, and naught good of avail
May he, old and exceeding old, anywise frame.
Ever will he be minded on every each morning
Of his son's faring elsewhere ; nothing he
heedeth 2450

Of abiding another withinward his burgs,
An heritage-warder, then whenas the one
By the very death's need hath found out the ill.
Sorrow-careful he seeth within his son's bower
The waste wine-hall, the resting-place now of the
winds,

All bereft of the revel ; the riders are sleeping,
The heroes in grave, and no voice of the harp is,
No game in the garths such as erewhile was gotten.

XXXV. BEOWULF TELLS OF PAST FEUDS, AND BIDS FAREWELL TO HIS FELLOWS: HE FALLS ON THE WORM, AND THE BATTLE OF THEM BEGINS.

THEN to sleeping-stead wendeth he, singeth
he sorrow,

The one for the other; o'er-roomy all
seem'd him

2460

The meads and the wick-stead. So the helm of
the Weders

For Herebeald's sake the sorrow of heart

All welling yet bore, and in nowise might he

On the banesman of that life the feud be a-
booting;

Nor ever the sooner that warrior might hate

With deeds loathly, though he to him nothing
was lief.

He then with the sorrow wherewith that sore
beset him

Man's joy-tide gave up, and chose him God's
light.

To his offspring he left, e'en as wealthy man
doeth,

His land and his folk-burgs when he from life
wended.

2470

Then sin was and striving of Swedes and of
Geats,
Over the wide water war-tide in common,
The hard horde-hate to wit sithence Hrethel
perish'd;
And to them ever were the Ongentheow's sons
Doughty and host-whetting, nowise then would
friendship
Hold over the waters; but round about Hreosna-
burgh
The fierce fray of foeman was oftentimes fram'd.
Kin of friends that mine were, there they awreaked
The feud and the evil deed, e'en as was famed;
Although he, the other, with his own life he
bought it, 2480
A cheaping full hard: unto Hæthcyn it was,
To the lord of the Geat-folk, a life-fateful war.
Learned I that the morrow one brother the other
With the bills' edges wreaked the death on the
banesman,
Whereas Ongentheow is a-seeking of Eofor:
Glode the war-helm asunder, the aged of Scylfings
Fell, sword-bleak; e'en so remember'd the hand
Feud enough; nor e'en then did the life-stroke
withhold.
I to him for the treasure which erewhile he
gave me

Repaid it in warring, as was to me granted, 2490
With my light-gleaming sword. To me gave he
land,

The hearth and the home-bliss : unto him was no
need

That unto the Gifthas or unto the Spear-Danes
Or into the Swede-realm he needs must go seeking
A worse wolf of war for a worth to be cheaping ;
For in the host ever would I be before him
Alone in the fore-front, and so life-long shall I
Be a-framing of strife, whileas tholeth the sword,
Which early and late hath bestead me full often,
Sithence was I by doughtiness unto Day-raven 2500
The hand-bane erst waxen, to the champion of
Hug-folk ;

He nowise the fretwork to the king of the
Frisians,

The breast-worship to wit, might bring any
more,

But cringed in battle that herd of the banner,
The Atheling in might : the edge naught was his
bane,

But for him did the war-grip the heart-wellings
of him

Break, the house of the bones. Now shall the
bill's edge,

The hand and hard sword, about the hoard battle.

So word uttered Beowulf, spake out the boast
word

For the last while as now : Many wars dared I 2510
In the days of my youth, and now will I yet,
The old warder of folk, seek to the feud,
Full gloriously frame, if the scather of foul-deed
From the hall of the earth me out shall be
seeking.

Greeted he then each one of the grooms,
The keen wearers of helms, for the last while of
whiles,

His own fellows the dear : No sword would I
fare with,

No weapon against the Worm, wist I but how
'Gainst the monster of evil in otherwise might I
Uphold me my boast, as erst did I with Grendel ;
But there fire of the war-tide full hot do I ween
me, 2521

And the breath, and the venom ; I shall bear on
me therefore

Both the board and the byrny ; nor the burg's
warden shall I

Overflee for a foot's-breadth, but unto us twain
It shall be at the wall as to us twain Weird
willeth,

The Maker of each man. Of mood am I
eager ;

So that 'gainst that war-flier from boast I withhold me.

Abide ye upon burg with your byrnies bewarded,
Ye men in your battle-gear, which may the better
After the slaughter-race save us from wounding
Of the twain of us. Naught is it yours to take over,
Nor the measure of any man save alone me, 2532
That he on the monster should mete out his
might,

Or work out the earlship : but I with my main
might

Shall gain me the gold, or else gets me the battle,
The perilous life-bale, e'en me your own lord.

Arose then by war-round the warrior renowned
Hard under helm, and the sword-sark he bare
Under the stone-cliffs : in the strength then he
trowed

Of one man alone ; no dastard's way such is. 2540
Then he saw by the wall (e'en he, who so many,
The good of man-bounties, of battles had out-liv'd,
Of crashes of battle whenas hosts were blended)
A stone-bow a-standing, and from out thence a
stream

Breaking forth from the burg ; was that burn's
outwelling

All hot with the war-fire ; and none nigh to the
hoard then

Might ever unburning any while bide,
Live out through the deep for the flame of the
drake.

Out then from his breast, for as bollen as was he,
Let the Weder-Geats' chief the words be out
faring ; 2550

The stout-hearted storm'd and the stave of him
enter'd

Battle-bright sounding in under the hoar stone.
Then uproused was hate, and the hoard-warden
wotted

The speech of man's word, and no more while
there was

Friendship to fetch. Then forth came there first
The breath of the evil beast out from the stone,
The hot sweat of battle, and dinn'd then the
earth.

The warrior beneath the burg swung up his
war-round

Against that grisly guest, the lord of the Geats ;
Then the heart of the ring-bow'd grew eager
therewith 2560

To seek to the strife. His sword ere had he
drawn,

That good lord of the battle, the leaving of old,
The undull of edges : there was unto either
Of the bale-minded ones the fear of the other.

All steadfast of mind stood against his steep
shield
The lord of the friends, when the Worm was
a-bowing
Together all swiftly, in war-gear he bided ;
Then boune was the burning one, bow'd in his
going,
To the fate of him faring. The shield was well
warding
The life and the lyke of the mighty lord king 2570
For a lesser of whiles than his will would have
had it,
If he at that frist on the first of the day
Was to wield him, as weird for him never will'd it,
The high-day of battle. His hand he up braided,
The lord of the Geats, and the grisly-fleck'd
smote he
With the leaving of Ing, in such wise that the
edge fail'd,
The brown blade on the bone, and less mightily
bit
Than the king of the nation had need in that
stour,
With troubles beset. But then the burg-warden
After the war-swing all wood of his mood 2580
Cast forth the slaughter-flame, sprung thereon
widely

The battle-gleams : nowise of victory he boasted,
The gold-friend of the Geats ; his war-bill had
falter'd,

All naked in war, in such wise as it should not,
The iron exceeding good. Naught was it easy
For him there, the mighty-great offspring of
Ecgtheow,

That he now that earth-plain should give up for
ever ;

But against his will needs must he dwell in the
wick

Of the otherwhere country ; as ever must each
man

Let go of his loan-days. Not long was it thence-
forth

2590

Ere the fell ones of fight fell together again.

The hoard-warden up-hearten'd him, welled his
breast

With breathing anew. Then narrow need bore he,
Encompass'd with fire, who erst the folk wielded ;
Nowise in a heap his hand-fellows there,

The bairns of the athelings, stood all about him
In valour of battle ; but they to holt bow'd them ;
Their dear life they warded ; but in one of them
welled

2598

His soul with all sorrow. So sib-ship may never
Turn aside any whit to the one that well thinketh.

XXXVI. WIGLAF SON OF WEOHSTAN
GOES TO THE HELP OF BEOWULF:
NÆGLING, BEOWULF'S SWORD, IS
BROKEN ON THE WORM.

WIGLAF so hight he, the son of Weohstan,
Lief linden-warrior, and lord of Scyl-
fings,

The kinsman of Aelfhere: and he saw his man-
lord

Under his host-mask tholing the heat;

He had mind of the honour that to him gave he
erewhile,

The wick-stead the wealthy of them, the Wæg-
mundings,

And the folk-rights each one which his father
had owned.

Then he might not withhold him, his hand gripp'd
the round,

Yellow linden; he tugg'd out withal the old sword,
That was known among men for the heirloom of
Eanmund,

2610

Ohthere's son, unto whom in the strife did be-
come,

To the exile unfriended, Weohstan for the bane
With the sword-edge, and unto his kinsmen bare
off

The helm the brown-brindled, the byrny beringed,
And the old eoten-sword that erst Onela gave
him;

Were they his kinsman's weed of the war,
Host-fight-gear all ready. Of the feud nothing
spake he,

Though he of his brother the bairn had o'er-
thrown.

But the host-gear befretted he held many seasons,
The bill and the byrny, until his own boy might
Do him the earlship as did his ere-father. 2621

Amidst of the Geats then he gave him the war-
weed

Of all kinds unnumber'd, whenas he from life
wended

Old on the forth-way. Then was the first time
For that champion the young that he the war-race
With his high lord the famed e'er he should
frame:

Naught melted his mood, naught the loom of
his kinsman

Weaken'd in war-tide; that found out the Worm
When they two together had gotten to come. 2629

Now spake out Wiglaf many words rightwise,
And said to his fellows: all sad was his soul:
I remember that while when we gat us the mead,
And whenas we behight to the high lord of us

In the beer-hall, e'en he who gave us these rings,
That we for the war-gear one while would pay,
If unto him thislike need e'er should befall,
For these helms and hard swords. So he chose
us from host

To this faring of war by his very own will,
Of glories he minded us, and gave me these gems
here,

Whereas us of gar-warriors he counted for good,
And bold bearers of helms. Though our lord
e'en for us

2641

This work of all might was of mind all alone
Himself to be framing, the herd of the folk,
Whereas most of all men he hath mightiness
framed,

Of deeds of all daring, yet now is the day come
Whereon to our man-lord behoveth the main
Of good battle-warriors; so thereunto wend we,
And help we the host-chief, whiles that the heat be,
The gleed-terror grim. Now of me wotteth God
That to me is much liefer that that, my lyke-
body,

2650

With my giver of gold the gleed should engrip.
Unmeet it methinketh that we shields should bear
Back unto our own home, unless we may erst
The foe fell adown and the life-days defend
Of the king of the Weders. Well wot I hereof

That his old deserts naught such were, that he
only

Of all doughty of Geats the grief should be bearing,
Sink at strife. Unto us shall one sword be, one
helm,

One byrny and shield, to both of us common.

Through the slaughter-reek waded he then,
bare his war-helm

2660

To the finding his lord, and few words he quoth :

O Beowulf the dear, now do thee all well,
As thou in thy youthful life quothest of yore,
That naught wouldst thou let, while still thou
wert living,

Thy glory fade out. Now shalt thou of deeds
famed,

The atheling of single heart, with all thy main
deal

For the warding thy life, and to stay thee I will.

Then after these words all wroth came the
Worm,

The dire guest foesome, that second of whiles
With fire-wellings flecked, his foes to go look on,
The loath men. With flame was lightly then
burnt up

2671

The board to the boss, and might not the byrny
To the warrior the young frame any help yet.

But so the young man under shield of his kinsman

Went onward with valour, whenas his own was
All undone with gleeds ; then again the war-king
Remember'd his glories, and smote with main
might

With his battle-bill, so that it stood in the head
Need-driven by war-hate. Then asunder burst
Nægling,

Waxed weak in the war-tide, e'en Beowulf's
sword,

2680

The old and grey-marked ; to him was not given
That to him any whit might the edges of irons
Be helpful in battle ; over-strong was the hand
Which every of swords, by the hearsay of me,
With its swing over-wrought, when he bare unto
strife

A wondrous hard weapon ; naught it was to him
better.

Then was the folk-scather for the third of
times yet,

The fierce fire-drake, all mindful of feud ;
He rac'd on that strong one, when was room to
him given,

Hot and battle-grim ; he all the halse of him
gripped

2690

With bitter-keen bones ; all bebloody'd he waxed
With the gore of his soul. Well'd in waves then
the war-sweat.

XXXVII. THEY TWO SLAY THE WORM.
BEOWULF IS WOUNDED DEADLY: HE
BIDDETH WIGLAF BEAR OUT THE
TREASURE.

THEN heard I that at need of the high
king of folk

The upright earl made well manifest might,
His craft and his keenness as kind was to him;
The head there he heeded not (but the hand
burned

Of that man of high mood when he helped his
kinsman),

Whereas he now the hate-guest smote yet a deal
nether,

That warrior in war-gear, whereby the sword
dived,

The plated, of fair hue, and thereby fell the flame
To minish thereafter, and once more the king's
self

2701

Wielded his wit, and his slaying-sax drew out,
The bitter and battle-sharp, borne on his byrny;
Asunder the Weder's helm smote the Worm mid-
most;

They felled the fiend, and force drave the life out,
And they twain together had gotten him ending,
Those athelings sib. E'en such should a man be,

A thane good at need. Now that to the king was
The last victory-while, by the deeds of himself,
Of his work of the world. Sithence fell the
wound, 2710

That the earth-drake to him had wrought but
erewhile,

To swell and to sweal; and this soon he found
out,

That down in the breast of him bale-evil welled,
The venom withinward; then the Atheling
wended,

So that he by the wall, bethinking him wisdom,
Sat on seat there and saw on the works of the
giants,

How that the stone-bows fast stood on pillars,
The earth-house everlasting upheld withinward.

Then with his hand him the sword-gory,
That great king his thane, the good beyond
measure, 2720

His friend-lord with water washed full well,
The sated of battle, and unspann'd his war-helm.

Forth then spake Beowulf, and over his wound
said,

His wound piteous deadly; wist he full well,
That now of his day-whiles all had he dreed,
Of the joy of the earth; all was shaken asunder
The tale of his days; death without measure nigh:

Unto my son now should I be giving
My gear of the battle, if to me it were granted
Any ward of the heritage after my days 2730
To my body belonging. This folk have I holden
Fifty winters ; forsooth was never a folk-king
Of the sitters around, no one of them soothly,
Who me with the war-friends durst wend him to
greet.

And bear down with the terror. In home have
I abided

The shapings of whiles, and held mine own well.
No wily hates sought I; for myself swore not many
Of oaths in unright. For all this may I,
Sick with the life-wounds, soothly have joy.
Therefore naught need wyte me the Wielder of
men 2740

With kin murder-bale, when breaketh asunder
My life from my lyke. And now lightly go thou
To look on the hoard under the hoar stone,
Wiglaf mine lief, now that lieth the Worm
And sleepeth sore wounded, beshorn of his
treasure ;

And be hasty that I now the wealth of old time,
The gold-having may look on, and yarely behold
The bright cunning gems, that the softlier may I
After the treasure-weal let go away
My life, and the folk-ship that long I have held.

XXXVIII. BEOWULF BEHOLDETH THE TREASURE AND PASSETH AWAY.

THEN heard I that swiftly the son of that
Weohstan 2751

After this word-say his lord the sore
wounded,

Battle-sick, there obeyed, and bare forth his ring-
net,

His battle-sark woven, in under the burg-roof;
Saw then victory-glad as by the seat went he,
The kindred-thane moody, sun-jewels a many,
Much glistering gold lying down on the ground,
Many wonders on wall, and the den of the Worm,
The old twilight-flier; there were flagons a-
standing, 2759

The vats of men bygone, of brighteners bereft,
And maim'd of adornment; was many an helm
Rusty and old, and of arm-rings a many
Full cunningly twined. All lightly may treasure,
The gold in the ground, every one of mankind
Befool with o'erweening, hide it who will.

Likewise he saw standing a sign there all-golden
High over the hoard, the most of hand-wonders,
With limb-craft belocked, whence light a ray
gleamed,

Whereby the den's ground-plain gat he to look on,

The fair works scan throughly. Not of the
Worm there

2770

Was aught to be seen now, but the edge had un-
done him.

Heard I then that in howe of the hoard was
bereaving,

The old work of the giants, but one man alone,
Into his barm laded beakers and dishes

At his|very own doom ; and the sign eke he took,
The brightest of beacons. But the bill of the old
lord

(The edge was of iron) erewhile it scathed
Him who of that treasure hand-bearer was
A long while, and fared a-bearing the flame-dread
Before the hoard hot, and welling of fierceness 2780
In the midnights, until that by murder he died.

In haste was the messenger, eager of back-fare,
Further'd with fretted gems. Him longing fordid
To wot whether the bold man he quick there shall
meet

In that mead-stead, e'en he the king of the
Weders,

All sick of his might, whereas he erst left him.

He fetching the treasure then found the king
mighty,

His own lord, yet there, and him ever all gory
At end of his life ; and he yet once again

Fell the water to warp o'er him, till the word's
point 2790

Brake through the breast-hoard, and Beowulf
spake out,

The aged, in grief as he gaz'd on the gold :

Now I for these fretworks to the Lord of all
thanking,

To the King of all glory, in words am yet saying,
To the Lord ever living, for that which I look on ;
Whereas such I might for the people of mine,
Ere ever my death-day, get me to own.

Now that for the treasure-hoard here have I sold
My life and laid down the same, frame still then
ever

The folk-need, for here never longer I may be. 2800
So bid ye the war-mighty work me a howe
Bright after the bale-fire at the sea's nose,
Which for a remembrance to the people of me
Aloft shall uplift him at Whale-ness for ever,
That it the sea-goers sithence may hote
Beowulf's Howe, e'en they that the high-ships
Over the flood-mists drive from afar.

Did off from his halse then a ring was all
golden,

The king the great-hearted, and gave to his thane,
To the spear-warrior young his war-helm gold-
brindled, 2810

The ring and the byrny, and bade him well brook
them :

Thou art the end-leaving of all of our kindred,
The Wægmundings; Weird now hath swept all
away

Of my kinsmen, and unto the doom of the Maker
The earls in their might; now after them shall I.

That was to the aged lord youngest of words
Of his breast-thoughts, ere ever he chose him the
bale,

The hot battle-wellings; from his heart now
departed

His soul, to seek out the doom of the soothfast.

XXXIX. WIGLAF CASTETH SHAME ON THOSE FLEERS.

BUT gone was it then with the unaged
man 2820

Full hard that there he beheld on the earth
The liefest of friends at the ending of life,
Of bearing most piteous. And likewise lay his bane
The Earth-drake, the loathly fear, reft of his life,
By bale laid undone : the ring-hoards no longer
The Worm, the crook-bowed, ever might wield;
For soothly the edges of the irons him bare off,
The hard battle-sharded leavings of hammers,

So that the wide-flier stilled with wounding
Fell onto earth anigh to his hoard-hall, 2830
Nor along the lift ever more playing he turned
At middle-nights, proud of the owning of treasure,
Show'd the face of him forth, but to earth there
he fell

Because of the host-leader's work of the hand.

This forsooth on the land hath thriven to few,
Of men might and main bearing, by hearsay of
mine,

Though in each of all deeds full daring he were,
That against venom-scather's fell breathing he
set on,

Or the hall of his rings with hand be a-stirring,
If so be that he waking the warder had found 2840

Abiding in burg. By Beowulf was

His deal of the king-treasure paid for by death ;

There either had they fared on to the end

Of this loaned life. Long it was not until

Those laggards of battle the holt were a-leaving,

Unwarlike troth-liars, the ten there together,

Who durst not e'en now with darts to be playing

E'en in their man-lord's most mickle need.

But shamefully now their shields were they
bearing,

Their weed of the battle, there where lay the
aged ; 2850

They gazed on Wiglaf where weary'd he sat,
The foot-champion, hard by his very lord's
shoulder,

And wak'd him with water : but no whit it sped
him ;

Never might he on earth howsoe'er well he
will'd it

In that leader of spears hold the life any more,
Nor the will of the Wielder change ever a whit ;
But still should God's doom of deeds rule the
rede

For each man of men, as yet ever it doth.

Then from out of the youngling an answer
full grim

2859

Easy got was for him who had lost heart erewhile,
And word gave out Wiglaf, Weohstan's son,
The sorrowful-soul'd man : on those unlied he
saw :

Lo that may he say who sooth would be saying,
That the man-lord who dealt you the gift of those
dear things,

The gear of the war-host wherein there ye stand,
Whereas he on the ale-bench full oft was a-giving
Unto the hall-sitters war-helm and byrny,

The king to his thanes, e'en such as he choicest
Anywhere, far or near, ever might find :
That he utterly wrongsome those weeds of the war

2869

Had cast away, then when the war overtook him.
Surely never the folk-king of his fellows in battle
Had need to be boastful; howsoever God gave
him,

The Victory-wielder, that he himself wreak'd him
Alone with the edge, when to him need of might
was.

Unto him of life-warding but little might I
Give there in the war-tide; and yet I began
Above measure of my might my kinsman to help;
Ever worse was the Worm then when I with sword
Smote the life-foe, and ever the fire less strongly
Welled out from his wit. Of warders o'er little
Throng'd about the king when him the battle
befell.

2882

Now shall taking of treasures and giving of
swords
And all joy of your country-home fail from your
kindred,
All hope wane away; of the land-right moreover
May each of the men of that kinsman's burg ever
Roam lacking; sithence that the athelings eft-
soons
From afar shall have heard of your faring in
flight,
Your gloryless deed. Yea, death shall be better
For each of the earls than a life ever ill-fam'd.

2890

XL. WIGLAF SENDETH TIDING TO
THE HOST: THE WORDS OF THE
MESSENGER.

THEN he bade them that war-work give
out at the barriers
Up over the sea-cliff, whereas then the earl-
host

The morning-long day sat sad of their mood,
The bearers of war-boards, in weening of both
things,

Either the end-day, or else the back-coming
Of the lief man. Forsooth he little was silent
Of the new-fallen tidings who over the ness rode,
But soothly he said over all there a-sitting :

Now is the will-giver of the folk of the Weders,
The lord of the Geats, fast laid in the death-bed,
In the slaughter-rest wonneth he by the Worm's
doings. 2901

And beside him yet lieth his very life-winner
All sick with the sax-wounds ; with sword might
he never

On the monster, the fell one, in any of manners
Work wounding at all. There yet sitteth Wiglaf,
Weohstan's own boy, over Beowulf king,
One earl over the other, over him the unliving ;
With heart-honours holdeth he head-ward withal

Over lief, over loath. But to folk is a weening
Of war-tide as now, so soon as unhidden 2910
To Franks and to Frisians the fall of the king
Is become over widely. Once was the strife shapen
Hard 'gainst the Hugs, sithence Hygelac came
Faring with float-host to Frisian land,
Whereas him the Hetware vanquish'd in war,
With might gat the gain, with o'er-mickle main ;
The warrior bebyrny'd he needs must bow down :
He fell in the host, and no fretted war-gear
Gave that lord to the doughty, but to us was aye
sithence

The mercy ungranted that was of the Merwing.
Nor do I from the Swede folk of peace or good
faith 2921

Ween ever a whit. For widely 'twas wotted
That Ongentheow erst had undone the life
Of Hæthcyn the Hrethel's son hard by the
Raven-wood,

Then when in their pride the Scylfings of war
Erst gat them to seek to the folk of the Geats.
Unto him soon the old one, the father of Ohthere,
The ancient and fearful gave back the hand-stroke,
Brake up the sea-wise one, rescued his bride,
The aged his spouse erst, bereft of the gold, 2930
Mother of Onela, yea and of Ohthere ;
And follow'd up thereon his foemen the deadly,

Until they betook them and sorrowfully therewith
Unto the Raven-holt, reft of their lord.

With huge host then beset he the leaving of swords
All weary with wounds, and woe he behight them,
That lot of the wretched, the livelong night
through;

Quoth he that the morrow's morn with the
swords' edges

He would do them to death, hang some on the
gallows

2939

For a game unto fowl. But again befell comfort
To the sorry of mood with the morrow-day early;
Whereas they of Hygelac's war-horn and trumpet
The voice wotted, whenas the good king his ways
came

Faring on in the track of his folk's doughty men.

XLI. MORE WORDS OF THE MES-
SENGER. HOW HE FEARS THE SWEDES
WHEN THEY WOT OF BEOWULF DEAD.

WAS the track of the war-sweat of Swedes
and of Geats,

The men's slaughter-race, right wide to
be seen,

How those folks amongst them were waking the
feud.

Departed that good one, and went with his fellows,
Old and exceeding sad, fastness to seek ;
The earl Ongentheow upward returned ; 2950
Of Hygelac's battle-might oft had he heard,
The war-craft of the proud one ; in withstanding
 he trow'd not,
That he to the sea-folk in fight might debate,
Or against the sea-farers defend him his hoard,
His bairns and his bride. He bow'd him aback
 thence,
The old under the earth-wall. Then was the
 chase bidden
To the Swede-folk, and Hygelac's sign was up-
 reared,
And the plain of the peaceforth on o'er-pass'd they,
After the Hrethlings onto the hedge throng'd.
There then was Ongentheow by the swords'
 edges, 2960
The blent-hair'd, the hoary one, driven to bidding,
So that the folk-king fain must he take
Sole doom of Eofor. Him in his wrath then
Wulf the Wonreding reach'd with his weapon,
So that from the stroke sprang the war-sweat in
 streams
Forth from under his hair ; yet naught fearsome
 was he,
The aged, the Scylfing, but paid aback rathely

With chaffer that worse was that war-crash of
slaughter,

Sithence the folk-king turned him thither ;

And nowise might the brisk one that son was of
Wonred

2970

Unto the old carle give back the hand-slaying,

For that he on Wulf's head the helm erst had
sheared,

So that all with the blood stained needs must he
bow,

And fell on the field ; but not yet was he fey,

But he warp'd himself up, though the wound
had touch'd nigh.

But thereon the hard Hygelac's thane there,

Whenas down lay his brother, let the broad blade,
The old sword of eotens, that helm giant-fashion'd
Break over the board-wall, and down the king
bowed,

The herd of the folk unto fair life was smitten.

There were many about there who bound up his
kinsman,

2981

Upraised him swiftly when room there was made
them,

That the slaughter-stead there at the stour they
might wield,

That while when was reaving one warrior the
other :

From Ongentheow took he the iron-wrought
byrny,

The hard-hilted sword, with his helm all together :

The hoary one's harness to Hygelac bare he ;

The fret war-gear then took he, and fairly be-
hight him

Before the folk due gifts, and even so did it ;

Gild he gave for that war-race, the lord of the
Geats,

2990

The own son of Hrethel, when home was he
come,

To Eofor and Wulf gave he over-much treasure,

To them either he gave an hundred of thousands,

Land and lock'd rings. Of the gift none needed
to wyte him

Of mid earth, since the glory they gained by
battle.

Then to Eofor he gave his one only daughter,

An home-worship soothly, for pledge of his good
will.

That is the feud and the foeship full soothly,

The dead-hate of men, e'en as I have a weening,

Wherefor the Swede people against us shall
seek,

3000

Sithence they have learned that lieth our lord

All lifeless ; e'en he that erewhile hath held

Against all the haters the hoard and the realm ;

Who after the heroes' fall held the fierce Scylfings,

Framed the folk-rede, and further thereto
Did earlship-deeds. Now is haste best of all
That we now the folk-king should fare to be
seeing,

And then that we bring him who gave us the
rings

On his way to the bale : nor shall somewhat alone
With the moody be molten ; but manifold hoard
is,

3010

Gold untold of by tale that grimly is cheapen'd,
And now at the last by this one's own life
Are rings bought, and all these the brand now
shall fret,

The flame thatch them over : no earl shall bear off
One gem in remembrance ; nor any fair maiden
Shall have on her halse a ring-honour thereof,
But in grief of mood henceforth, bereaved of gold,
Shall oft, and not once alone, alien earth tread,
Now that the host-learn'd hath laid aside laughter,
The game and the glee-joy. Therefore shall the
spear,

3020

Full many a morn-cold, of hands be bewounden,
Uphoven in hand ; and no swough of the harp
Shall waken the warriors ; but the wan raven
rather

Fain over the fey many tales shall tell forth,
And say to the erne how it sped him at eating,
While he with the wolf was a-spoiling the slain.

So was the keen-whetted a-saying this while
Spells of speech loathly; he lied not much
Of weirds or of words. Then uprose all the
war-band, 3029

And unblithe they wended under the Ernes-ness,
All welling of tears, the wonder to look on.
Found they then on the sand, now lacking of soul,
Holding his bed, him that gave them the rings
In time erewhile gone by. But then was the end-
day

Gone for the good one; since the king of the
battle,

The lord of the Weders, in wonder-death died.
But erst there they saw a more seldom-seen sight,
The Worm on the lea-land over against him
Down lying there loathly; there was the fire-
drake,

The grim of the terrors, with gleeds all beswealed.
He was of fifty feet of his measure 3041

Long of his lying. Lift-joyance held he
In the whiles of the night, but down again wended
To visit his den. Now fast was he in death,
He had of the earth-dens the last end enjoyed.
There by him now stood the beakers and howls,

There lay the dishes and dearly-wrought swords,
Rusty, through-eaten they, as in earth's bosom
A thousand of winters there they had wonned.
For that heritage there was, all craftily eked, 3050
Gold of the yore men, in wizardry wounden;
So that that ring-hall might none reach thereto,
Not any of mankind but if God his own self,
Sooth king of victories, gave unto whom he would
(He is holder of men) to open that hoard,
E'en to whichso of mankind should seem to him
meet.

XLII. THEY GO TO LOOK ON THE FIELD OF DEED.

THEN it was to be seen that throve not the
way
To him that unrightly had hidden within
there
The fair gear 'neath the wall. The warder erst
slew
Some few of folk, and the feud then became 3060
Wrothfully wreaked. A wonder whenas
A valour-strong earl may reach on the ending
Of the fashion of life, when he longer in nowise
One man with his kinsmen may dwell in the
mead-hall!

So to Beowulf was it when the burg's ward he
sought,

For the hate of the weapons : he himself knew not
Wherethrough forsooth his world's sundering
should be.

So until Doomsday they cursed it deeply,
Those princes the dread, who erst there had
done it,

That that man should be of sins never sackless,
A-hoppled in shrines, in hell-bonds fast set, 3071
With plague-spots be punish'd, who that plain
should plunder.

But naught gold-greedy was he, more gladly had
he

The grace of the Owner erst gotten to see.

Now spake out Wiglaf, that son was of Weoh-
stan :

Oft shall many an earl for the will but of one
Dree the wrack, as to us even now is befallen :
Nowise might we learn the lief lord of us,
The herd of the realm, any of rede,

That he should not go greet that warder of
gold, 3080

But let him live yet, whereas long he was lying,
And wonne in his wicks until the world's ending ;
But he held to high weird and the hoard hath
been seen,

Grimly gotten: o'er hard forsooth was that
giving,

That the king of the folk e'en thither enticed.

Lo! I was therein, and I look'd it all over,

The gear of the house, when for me room was
gotten,

But I lightly in nowise had leave for the passage

In under the earth-wall; in haste I gat hold

Forsooth with my hands of a mickle main bur-
den

3090

Of hoard-treasures, and hither then out did I
bear them,

Out unto my king, and then quick was he yet,

Wise, and wit-holding: a many things spake he,

That aged in grief-care, and bade me to greet you,

And pray'd ye would do e'en after your friend's
deeds

Aloft in the bale-stead a howe builded high,

Most mickle and mighty, as he amongst men was

The worthfullest warrior wide over the world,

While he the burg-weal erewhile might brook.

Then so let us hasten this second of whiles

3100

To see and to seek the throng of things strange,

The wonder 'neath wall; I shall wise you the way,

So that ye from a-near may look on enough

Of rings and broad gold; and be the bier swiftly

All yare thereunto, whenas out we shall fare.

Then let us so ferry the lord that was ours,
The lief man of men, to where long shall he
In the All-Wielder's keeping full patiently wait.

Bade then to bid the bairn of that Weohstan,
The deer of the battle, to a many of warriors, 3110
The house-owning wights, that the wood of the
bale

They should ferry from far, e'en the folk-owning
men,

Toward the good one. And now shall the
gleed fret away,

The wan flame a-waxing, the strong one of
warriors,

Him who oft-times abided the shower of iron
When the storm of the shafts driven on by the
strings

Shook over the shield-wall, and the shaft held its
service,

And eager with feather-gear follow'd the barb.

Now then the wise one, that son was of Weoh-
stan,

Forth from the throng then call'd of the king's
thanes 3120

A seven together, the best to be gotten,
And himself went the eighth in under the foe-
roof;

One man of the battlers in hand there he bare

A gleam of the fire, of the first went he inward.
It was nowise allotted who that hoard should
despoil,
Sithence without warden some deal that there
was

The men now beheld in the hall there a-wonning,
Lying there fleeting; little mourn'd any,
That they in all haste outward should ferry
The dear treasures. But forthwith the drake
did they shove, 3130
The Worm, o'er the cliff-wall, and let the wave
take him,
The flood fathom about the fretted works' herd.
There then was wunden gold on the wain
laden
Untold of each kind, and the Atheling borne,
The hoary of warriors, out on to Whale-ness.

XLIII. OF THE BURIAL OF BEOWULF.

FOR him then they geared, the folk of the
Geats,
A pile on the earth all unweaklike that was,
With war-helms behung, and with boards of the
battle,
And bright byrnies, e'en after the boon that he
bade.

Laid down then amidmost their king mighty-
famous 3140

The warriors lamenting, the lief lord of them.

Began on the burg of bale-fires the biggest

The warriors to waken: the wood-reek went up

Swart over the smoky glow, sound of the flame

Bewound with the weeping (the wind-blending
stilled),

Until it at last the bone-house had broken

Hot at the heart. All unglad of mind

With mood-care they mourned their own liege
lord's quelling.

Likewise a sad lay the wife of aforetime

For Beowulf the king, with her hair all up-
bounden, 3150

Sang sorrow-careful; said oft and over

That harm-days for herself in hard wise she
dreaded,

The slaughter-falls many, much fear of the
warrior,

The shaming and bondage. Heaven swallow'd
the reek.

Wrought there and fashion'd the folk of the
Weders

A howe on the lithe, that high was and broad,

Unto the wave-farers wide to be seen:

Then it they betimber'd in time of ten days,

The battle-strong's beacon; the brands' very
leavings

They bewrought with a wall in the worthiest of
ways, 3160

That men of all wisdom might find how to work.

Into burg then they did the rings and bright
sun-gems,

And all such adornments as in the hoard there

The war-minded men had taken e'en now;

The earls' treasures let they the earth to be hold-
ing,

Gold in the grit, wherein yet it liveth,

As useless to men-folk as ever it erst was.

Then round the howe rode the deer of the
battle,

The bairns of the athelings, twelve were they in all.

Their care would they mourn, and bemoan them
their king, 3170

The word-lay would they utter and over the man
speak:

They accounted his earlship and mighty deeds
done,

And doughtily deem'd them; as due as it is

That each one his friend-lord with words should
belaud,

And love in his heart, whenas forth shall he

Away from the body be fleeting at last.

In such wise they grieved, the folk of the Geats,
For the fall of their lord, e'en they his hearth-
fellows ;

Quoth they that he was a world-king forsooth,
The mildest of all men, unto men kindest, 3180
To his folk the most gentlest, most yearning of
fame.

PERSONS AND PLACES

(Numbers refer to Pages)

BEANSTAN, father of Breca (31).

Beowulf the Dane (not Beowulf the Geat, the hero of the poem) was the grandfather of Hrothgar (2, 4).

Beowulf the Geat. *See* the Argument.

Breca (30), who contended with Beowulf in swimming, was a chief of the Brondings (31).

Brisings' neck-gear (70). "This necklace is the Brisingamen, the costly necklace of Freyja, which she won from the dwarfs and which was stolen from her by Loki, as is told in the Edda" (Kemble). In our poem, it is said that Hama carried off this necklace when he fled from Eormenric, king of the Ostrogoths

DAYRAVEN (143), a brave warrior of the Hugs, and probably the slayer of Hygelac, whom, in that case, Beowulf avenged.

EADGILS, Eanmund (136, 137), "sons of Ohthere," and nephews of the Swedish King Onela, by whom they were banished from their native land for rebellion. They took refuge at the court of the Geat King Heardred, and Onela, "Ongentheow's bairn," enraged at their finding an asylum with his hereditary foes, invaded Geatland, and slew Heardred. At a later time Beowulf, when king of the

Geats, balanced the feud by supporting Eadgils in an invasion of Sweden, in which King Onela was slain.

Eanmund (149), while in exile at the court of the Geats, was slain by Weohstan, father of Wiglaf, and stripped of the armour given him by his uncle, the Swedish King Onela. Weohstan "spake not about the feud, although he had slain Onela's brother's son," probably because he was not proud of having slain an "exile unfriended" in a private quarrel.

Ecglaf, father of Unferth, Hrothgar's spokesman (29).

Ecgtheow (22), father of Beowulf the Geat, by the only daughter of Hrethel, king of the Geats. Having slain Heatholaf, a warrior of the Wylfings, Ecgtheow sought protection at the court of the Danish King Hrothgar, who accepted his fealty and settled the feud by a money-payment (27). Hence the heartiness of Beowulf's welcome at Hrothgar's hands.

Ecgwela. The Scyldings or Danes are once called "Ecgwela's offspring" (99). He may have been the founder of the older dynasty of Danish kings which ended with Heremod.

Eofor (142, 167-9), a Geat warrior, brother of Wulf. He came to the aid of his brother in his single combat with the Swedish King Ongentheow, and slew the king, being rewarded by Hygelac with the hand of his only daughter.

Eotens (61, 62, 66) are the people of Finn, king of Friesland. In other passages, it is merely a name for a race of monsters.

FINN (61-7). The somewhat obscure Finn episode in *Beowulf* appears to be part of a Finn epic, of which only the merest fragment, called the *Fight at Finnsburg*, is extant. The following conjectured outline of the whole

story is based on this fragment and on the Beowulf episode : Finn, king of the Frisians, had carried off Hildeburh, daughter of Hoc, probably with her consent. Her father, Hoc, seems to have pursued the fugitives, and to have been slain in the fight which ensued on his overtaking them. After the lapse of some twenty years Hoc's sons, Hnæf and Hengest, are old enough to undertake the duty of avenging their father's death. They make an inroad into Finn's country, and a battle takes place in which many warriors, among them Hnæf and a son of Finn, are killed. Peace is then solemnly concluded, and the slain warriors are burnt. As the year is too far advanced for Hengest to return home, he and those of his men who survive remain for the winter in the Frisian country with Finn. But Hengest's thoughts dwell constantly on the death of his brother Hnæf, and he would gladly welcome any excuse to break the peace which had been sworn by both parties. His ill-concealed desire for revenge is noticed by the Frisians, who anticipate it by themselves attacking Hengest and his men whilst they are sleeping in the hall. This is the night attack described in the *Fight at Finnsburg*. It would seem that after a brave and desperate resistance Hengest himself falls in this fight at the hands of the son of Hunlaf (66), but two of his retainers, Guthlaf and Oslaf, succeed in cutting their way through their enemies and in escaping to their own land. They return with fresh troops, attack and slay Finn, and carry his queen Hildeburh back to the Daneland.

Folkwalda (62), father of Finn.

Franks (70, 165). Hygelac, king of the Geats, was defeated and slain early in the sixth century, in his historical invasion of the Netherlands, by a combined army of Frisians, Franks, and Hugs.

Ereawaru (116), daughter of Hrothgar and Wealhtheow. Beowulf tells Hygelac that her father has betrothed her to Ingeld, prince of the Heathobards; in the hope of settling the feud between the two peoples. But he prophesies that the hope will prove vain: for an old Heathobard warrior, seeing a Danish chieftain accompany Freawaru to their court laden with Heathobard spoils, will incite the son of the former owner of the plundered treasure to revenge, until blood is shed, and the feud is renewed. That this was what afterwards befell, we learn from the Old English poem *Widsith*. *See also* ll. 83-5.

Friesland (65), the land of the North Frisians.

Frieslands (135), Frisian land (165), the home of the West Frisians.

Frisians. Two tribes are to be distinguished: 1. The North Frisians (61, 63), the people of Finn. 2. The West Frisians (143, 165), who combined with the Franks and Hugs and defeated Hygelac, between 512 and 520 A.D.

Froda (117), father of Ingeld. *See* Freawaru.

GUTHLAF and Oslaf (66). *See* Finn.

HÆRETH (112, 114), father of Hygd, wife of Hygelac.

Hæthcyn (139, 142, 165), second son of Hrethel, king of the Geats, and thus elder brother of Hygelac. He accidentally killed his elder brother Herebeald with a bow-shot, to the inconsolable grief of Hrethel. He succeeded to the throne at his father's death, but fell in battle at Ravenwood (165) by the hand of the Swedish King Ongentheow.

Half-Danes (61), the tribe to which Hnæf belongs. *See* Finn.

Hama (69). *See* Brisings.

Healfdene (4), king of the Danes, son of Beowulf the Scylding, and father of Hrothgar, "Healfdene's son" (16).

- Heardred (126, 136-7), son of Hygelac and Hygd. While still under age he succeeds his father as king of the Geats, Beowulf, who has refused the throne himself, being his counsellor and protector. He is slain by "Ongentheow's bairn" (137), Onela, king of the Swedes.
- Heathobards, Lombards, the tribe of Ingeld, the betrothed of Freawaru, Hrothgar's daughter (117).
- Heatholaf (27). *See* Ecgtheow.
- Helmings. "The Dame of the Helmings" (36) is Hrothgar's queen, Wealhtheow.
- Hemming. "The Kinsman of Hemming" is a name for Offa (112) and for his son Eomær (113).
- Hengest (62-5). *See* Finn.
- Heorogar (5), elder brother of Hrothgar (27), did not leave his armour to his son Heoroward (124); but Hrothgar gives it to Beowulf, and Beowulf gives it to Hygelac.
- Herebeald (139, 141), eldest son of the Geat King Hrethel, was accidentally shot dead with an arrow by his brother Hæthcyn.
- Heremod (53, 99) is twice spoken of as a bad and cruel Danish king. In the end he is betrayed into the hands of his foes.
- Hereric may have been brother of Hygd, Hygelac's queen, for their son Heardred is spoken of as "the nephew of Hereric" (126).
- Here-Scyldings (64), Army-Scyldings, a name of the Danes.
- Hetware (135, 165), the Hattuarii of the *Historia Francorum* of Gregory of Tours and of the *Gesta Regum Francorum*, were the tribe against which Hygelac was raiding when he was defeated and slain by an army of Frisians, Franks, and Hugs.
- Hildeburh (61, 64). *See* Finn.
- Hnæf (61, 64). *See* Finn.
- Hoc (62). *See* Finn.

Hrethel, a former king of the Geats; son of Swerting (70), father of Hygelac and grandfather of Beowulf (22), to whom he left his coat of mail (26). He died of grief at the loss of his eldest son Herebeald (139-41), who was accidentally slain by his brother Hæthcyn.

Hrethlings (167), the people of Hrethel, the Geats.

Hrethmen (26), Triumph-men, the Danes.

Hrethric (69, 106), elder son of Hrothgar and Wealhtheow.

Hrothgar. *See* the Argument.

Hrothulf (59, 68), probably the son of Hrothgar's younger brother Halga (5). He lives at the Danish court. Wealhtheow hopes that, if he survives Hrothgar, he will be good to their children in return for their kindness to him. It would seem that this hope was not to be fulfilled ("yet of kindred unsunder'd," 67).

Hygd, daughter of Hæreth, wife of Hygelac, the king of the Geats, and mother of Heardred. She may well be "the wife of aforetime" (177).

Hygelac, third son of Hrethel (139) and uncle to Beowulf, is the reigning king of the Geats during the greater part of the action of the poem. When his brother Hæthcyn was defeated and slain by Ongentheow at Ravenwood (165), Hygelac quickly went in pursuit and put Ongentheow to flight; but although, as leader of the attack, he is called "the banesman of Ongentheow" (114), the actual slayer was Eofor (142, 167), whom Hygelac rewarded with the hand of his only daughter (169). Hygelac came by his death between 512 and 520 A.D., in his historical invasion of the Netherlands, which is referred to in the poem four times (70, 135, 143, 165).

ING (147). *See* Ingwines.

Ingeld (119). *See* Freawaru.

Ingwines (60, 77), "friends of Ing," the Danes. Ing, according to the Old English *Rune-Poem*, "was first seen by men amid the East Danes"; he has been identified with Frea.

MERWING, The (165), the Merovingian king of the Franks.

OFFA (113). See Thrytho.

Ohthere (136-7, 165), son of the Swedish King Ongentheow, and father of Eanmund and Eadgils (*q.v.*).

Onela, "Ongentheow's bairn" (137) and elder brother of Ohthere, is king of Sweden ("the helm of the Scylfings," 136) at the time of the rebellion of Eanmund and Eadgils. He invades the land of the Geats, which has harboured the rebels, slays Heardred, son of Hygelac, and then retreats before Beowulf. At a later time Beowulf avenges the death of Heardred by supporting Eadgils, "son of Ohthere" (137), in an invasion of Sweden, in which Onela is slain. See also Eadgils; and compare the slaying of Ali by Athils on the ice of Lake Wener in the Icelandic "Heimskringla."

Ongentheow, father of Onela and Ohthere, was a former king of the Swedes. The earlier strife between the Swedes and the Geats, in which he is the chief figure, is fully related by the messenger (164) who brings the tidings of Beowulf's death. In retaliation for the marauding invasions of Onela and Ohthere (142), Hæthcyn invaded Sweden, and took Ongentheow's queen prisoner. Ongentheow in return invaded the land of her captor, whom he slew, and rescued his wife (165); but in his hour of triumph he was attacked in his turn by Hygelac near Ravenwood, and fell by the hand of Eofor (168).

SCANEY (97), Scede-lands (2), the most southern portion of the Scandinavian peninsula, belonging to the Danes; used in our poem for the whole Danish kingdom.

Scyld (1), son of Sheaf, was the mythical founder of the royal Danish dynasty of Scyldings.

Scyldings, descendants of Scyld, properly the name of the reigning Danish dynasty, is commonly extended to include the Danish people (3).

Scylfing: "the Scylfing" (167), "the aged of Scylfings" (142), is Ongentheow.

Scylfings (136), the name of the reigning Swedish dynasty, was extended to the Swedish people in the same way as "Scyldings" to the Danes. Beowulf's kinsman Wiglaf is called "lord of Scylfings" (149), and in another passage the name is apparently applied to the Geats (170); this seems to point to a common ancestry of Swedes and Geats, or it may be that Beowulf's father Ecgtheow was a "Scylfing."

THRYTHO (112), wife of the Angle King Offa and mother of Eomær, is mentioned in contrast to Hygd, just as Heremod is a foil to Beowulf. She is at first the type of a cruel, unwomanly queen. But by her marriage with Offa, who seems to be her second husband, she is subdued and changed until her fame even adds glory to his.

UNFERTH, son of Ecglaf, is the spokesman of Hrothgar, at whose feet he sits. He is of a jealous disposition, and is twice spoken of as the murderer of his own brothers (34, 67). Taunting Beowulf with defeat in his swimming-match with Breca, he is silenced by the hero's reply, and more effectually still by the issue of the struggle with Grendel (57). Afterwards, however, he lends his sword Hrunting for Beowulf's encounter with Grendel's mother (85, 104).

WÆGMUNDINGS (149, 160), the family to which both Beowulf and Wiglaf belong. Their fathers, Ecgtheow and Weohstan, may have been sons of Wægmund.

Wedermark (17), the land of the Weder-Geats, *i.e.* the Geats.

Weders, Weder-Geats (13, 86, 122), Geats.

Weland (26), the Völund of the Edda, the famous smith of Teutonic legend, was the maker of Beowulf's coat of mail. See the figured casket in the British Museum; and compare "Wayland Smith's Cave" near the White Horse, in Berkshire.

Weohstan was the father of Beowulf's kinsman and faithful henchman Wiglaf, and the slayer of Eanmund (149).

Wonred, father of "Wulf the Wonreding" (167), and of Eofor.

Wulf (167). *See* Eofor.

Wulfgar, "a lord of the Wendels" (20), is an official of Hrothgar's court, where he is the first to greet Beowulf and his Geats, and introduces them to Hrothgar.

Wythergyld (118) is a warrior of the Heathobards.

THE MEANING OF SOME WORDS NOT COMMONLY USED NOW

(Numbers refer to Pages)

- A-banning*, the work was (5), orders for the work were given.
- Arede* (118), possess.
- Atheling*, prince, noble, noble warrior.
- Barm*, lap, bosom.
- Behalsed* (5), embraced by the neck.
- Berne*, man, warrior, hero.
- Bestead* (143), served.
- Beswealed*, scorched, burnt.
- Beswinked*, sweated.
- Birlers*, cup-bearers.
- Board*, shield.
- Bode*, announce.
- Bollen*, swollen, angry.
- Boot* (9), compensation.
- Boun* (18), made ready.
- Braided* (147), drew, lifted.
- Brim*, sea.
- Brook*, use, enjoy.
- Burg*, fortified place, stronghold, mount, barrow; protection; protector; family (163).
- Byrny*, coat of mail.
- Devil-dray*, nest of devils. Cf. *squirrel's-dray*, common in Berks; used by Cowper.
- Dreary*, bloody.
- Dree*, do, accomplish, suffer, enjoy, spend (155).
- Ealdor*, chief, lord.
- Eme*, uncle.
- Eoten*, giant, monster, enemy.
- Fathom*, embrace.
- Feeless*, not to be atoned for with money.
- Ferry*, bring, carry.
- Fifel*, monster.
- Flying*, contending, scolding.
- Fold*, the earth.
- Forbeed*, disregard.

WORDS NOT COMMONLY USED NOW 191

<i>Forwritten</i> , proscribed.	<i>Rimed</i> , counted, reckoned.
<i>Frist</i> , space of time, delay.	<i>Sea-lode</i> , sea-voyage.
<i>Gar</i> , spear.	<i>Sin</i> , malice, hatred, hostility.
<i>Graithly</i> , readily, well.	<i>Skinked</i> , poured out.
<i>Halse</i> , neck.	<i>Slot</i> , track.
<i>Hand-shoal</i> , band of warriors.	<i>Staple</i> , threshold.
<i>Hery</i> , praise.	<i>Stone-bow</i> , arch of stone.
<i>Hild-play</i> , battle.	<i>Sty</i> , stride, ascend, descend.
<i>Holm</i> , ocean, sea.	<i>Sweal</i> , burn.
<i>Holm-throng</i> , eddy of the sea.	<i>Through-witting</i> , understanding.
<i>Holt</i> , wood.	<i>Undern</i> , from 9 o'clock till 12
<i>Hote</i> , call.	o'clock; "at undren and at
<i>Howe</i> , mound, burial-mound.	middai," O.E. Miscellany.
<i>Hythe</i> , ferry, haven.	<i>Warths</i> , shores, still in use at
<i>Kemp</i> , champion, fighter.	Wick St. Lawrence, in
<i>Lithe</i> , slope.	Somerset.
<i>Loom</i> , heirloom.	<i>Wick</i> , dwelling.
<i>Low</i> (133), flame.	<i>Wick-stead</i> , dwelling-place.
<i>Lyke</i> , body.	<i>Wise</i> , direct, show.
<i>Moody</i> , brave, proud.	<i>Wit-lust</i> , curiosity.
<i>Nicors</i> , sea-monsters.	<i>Worth</i> , shall be.
<i>Nithing</i> (12), spite, malice.	<i>Wreak</i> , utter.
<i>O'erthanking</i> , overweening, arrogance.	<i>Wyte</i> , blame, charge with.
<i>Rail</i> , railings, coat, armour.	<i>Tare</i> , ready.
	<i>Tode</i> , went.

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